FROM MIDSHIPMAN TO FIELD MARSHAL

SIR EVELYN WOOD

·F·M· ·V·C·

Fiennes Stanley Wykeham
Cornwallis.

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FROM MIDSHIPMAN TO FIELD MARSHAL

W. Orpen, R.A.

Lucky Wood F.M.

1906.

FROM MIDSHIPMAN TO FIELD MARSHAL

BY

EVELYN WOOD, F.M.
V.C., G.C.B., G.C.M.G.

IN TWO VOLUMES

WITH TWENTY-FOUR ILLUSTRATIONS AND MAPS

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FROM MIDSHIPMAN TO FIELD MARSHAL

CHAPTER XXVI

1878—FROM KING WILLIAM'S TOWN TO UTRECHT

The unreadiness for war of a Regimental system—A Baca hairdresser, Pondoland—Its white Queen, Mrs. Jenkins—General Thesiger—Purchase of Regimental Transport—Faku—Cetewayo's Military kraal, Luneberg, its Military occupation—Manyoba.

ON the 26th June, my new Command, the Natal Column, consisting of 4 guns, 5 companies 90th Light Infantry (in which I was still a supernumerary Major), and a company Mounted Infantry, left Kei Road, Major Buller with 200 Frontier Light staying behind for a week to enlist men, was to overtake us. Up to Kokstadt we marched over treeless rolling plains, and in spite of the fact that we crossed 122 (unbridged) rivers, it frequently happened there was not sufficient water for the Column. I rode, therefore, every march three times. Leaving my excellent Staff officer, Captain F. Grenfell,[1] K.R.R. Corps, to encamp the Column, I went on to the next camping ground, as local information was unreliable. It was generally offered by Storekeepers, whose estimate of the quantity required was often based on the assumption that all Europeans would consume bottled beer. This, indeed, many of our men did, at 2s. a bottle. Our canteen President bought at Mount Frere £40 worth of stores from Mr. McGregor,[2] who had become a prosperous colonist. He interested me by extolling Colonel Eyre, though he was present

[1] Now General Lord Grenfell, G.C.B. [2] Ex-private soldier, 73rd Regiment.

in the march from the Perie to the Döhne, when Eyre burned the blankets and food of the stragglers—*vide* p. 248, vol. i. Two other former 73rd men rode 40 miles to see "A friend of Master Arthur Eyre, their own Colonel's boy."[1]

The arrangements for equipping the battalion which now came more closely under my command left much to be desired, and I doubt whether the officers realised more clearly than those in authority at Home the necessity of good boots and flannel shirts in order to maintain soldiers efficient. I was obliged to buy flannel shirts for the Rank and File which cost the men 12s. each, as they had been allowed to go on service wearing cotton, and some with only one of that nature. This accounted for many having fever on the Amatolas, as the temperature varied from 75° at noon to 30° at night.

Nor was the administration more creditable to our Military rulers. In order to economise passage money, no non-commissioned officer or soldier with less than eighteen months to complete twenty-one years, was allowed to embark, while all the recruits were sent out. Thus the Sergeants and old soldiers left at Home had nothing to do, while the officers had insufficient non-commissioned officers to help in training the recruits. Incomplete and unsatisfactory, however, as were the Regimental arrangements, they were virtually all that existed in South Africa, the Departments being represented by very few officers; and thus no sooner was I ordered to march, than I received a requisition for 5 non-commissioned officers, and selected men to form a Hospital, and 5 to form a Commissariat department. In the result this left but 7 duty Sergeants with the 5 companies of rather more than 500 men.

The difficulties of crossing the numerous rivers in the journey of 500 miles exercised our patience. When the team of 16 or 18 oxen failed to pull the waggon and its load out of a river, another team of similar strength was hooked in, often with the result that one of the wheels was wrenched off by a boulder of rock which stopped the progress of the vehicle. This procedure was suitable, moreover, only when the "pull out" was fairly straight; if, as frequently happened, the gravel forming the ford was deposited on a curved line, every waggon had to be hauled out by one team assisted by manual labour,

[1] Killed in Ashanti. *Vide* p. 279, vol. i.

and to lift or extricate a waggon with its load equal to 6000 lbs. dead weight involved much labour. Even with comparatively easy fords the crossing of a river—for example, the Kei, between 80 and 90 yards wide, only 4 feet 6 inches deep —took five hours; the first waggon entering the water at 7.30, and the last pulling out at 3.30, the waggons taking on an average forty-five minutes to cross; and although I had arranged for a short march, we did not encamp till nearly 11 p.m. the day we crossed the river.

At Colossa, a village which Captain Grenfell and I visited in advance of the Column, I asked him to go into a kraal to ask where was the nearest drinking-water. He observed that there was not much chance of ascertaining, as he had no interpreter; but I replied that I thought he would find the mother of some children whom we saw playing could speak English, as I noticed they were playing like English children a "dolls' dinner party," with white berries to represent food, on little bits of tin representing plates, and none but the children of a Fingoe, or one who had been about white people, would be so advanced in their amusements. The result proved that my surmise was correct.

When we were travelling through Bacaland to the north of Pondoland, I was riding with an interpreter and 2 white soldiers two hours' march in advance of the Column, and near Tchungwassa, a valley under Mount Frere, came on a native who had the head of another between his knees, and was engaged in curling every separate bit of wool on the man's thickly covered skull. The Bacas and neighbouring tribes spend hours in order to produce results which seem to us funny. I have seen the wool on a man's head twisted up to represent the head of a castle in a set of chess men, and a bird's nest is a favourite device. Sitting down, I asked the hairdresser why he was taking such pains, and he explained because there was a wedding feast in the next village. "How much are you going to charge him for the job?" "Oh, nothing; he is a friend of mine." "Well, how much would you charge him for what you are doing if it was a matter of business?" "I always charge a shilling when I am doing it as I am now." "Do you know who I am?" "Yes, you are the General of the Army coming here to-day." "Well, what

will you charge to dress my head?" I fully expected the man would say 5s., but looking at my scanty hair, with a merry twinkle in his eye he exclaimed, "Oh, I will do you for three pence!"

I had a visit from Macaula, Chief of the Bacas, when I entered his territory, a fine big savage, 6 feet 3 inches in height, and broad in proportion. He was the happy owner of 22 wives, and informed me that he had 59 children. I said laughingly, "Why not make it 60?" He observed, with great gravity, "I had forgotten one; I heard this morning as I was coming here that I had another, and so it is 60." He was very anxious to buy my weight-carrying hunter "War-Game," as, weighing 15 stone, it was difficult to find a pony to carry him, and asked if I would sell the horse. He was startled by my statement that he cost 24 oxen as a four-year-old, a trek ox there being reckoned at £10.

The object of our long march was to impress the Pondos with a sense of British power, and I had been warned on leaving King William's Town that I might have to coerce Umquikela, one of the Chiefs of Pondoland. He and his relative Umquiliso had given the Colonial authorities much trouble, for there was continual warfare between the tribes, with the result that those who got beaten invariably fled into the land set aside for tribes under our protection, and, moreover, Umquikela had recently misbehaved. The Governor, Sir Bartle Frere, informed General Thesiger that while he was confident I should not fight if it was possible to attain our end without bloodshed, yet it had been determined that Umquikela should be deposed from the position of Chief unless he behaved better. This black Potentate was under the influence of traders, to whose advantage it was that he should retain his independence. He received much good advice from a widow, Mrs. Jenkins, who lived at Umfundisweeni,[1] about 40 miles to the south of Kokstadt. Mr. Jenkins had lived amongst the Pondos for many years, and was deservedly held in high esteem by them, so much so that his widow stayed on, being known by the name of the "Pondo Queen." She was embittered against the High Commissioner, and the Colonial Government, and, like

[1] The place of teaching.

other advocates for the rights of the "Black man," was under the impression that the Government could do nothing right, and her favourites could do nothing wrong.

Prolonged correspondence by telegraph, and indecision on the part of the Colonial Government, caused the Column to be halted for over a month at Kokstadt, an uninviting, treeless, barren waste, to the great vexation of all Ranks. To me it was less irksome, as I had the interest of the Political situation, the two Resident magistrates being ordered to work with me, and, moreover, I had a delightful companion not only in Captain Grenfell, whom I have mentioned, but in Lieutenant Arthur Bigge,[1] Royal Artillery. He came to me with a good reputation, and I saw a great deal of him in Camp, although on the lines of march but little, having chosen him to make a road sketch from King William's Town to Maritzburg, which he did very well. He and Grenfell accompanied me to Umfundisweeni, where I was sent by the High Commissioner to interview Umquikela.

I went down on the 17th of August with an escort of 20 Mounted Infantry, and Mrs. Jenkins, outside whose garden I pitched my tent, did her best to induce Umquikela to meet me. She was an interesting old lady, but had lived so long amongst the Pondos as to lose the sense of justice where they were concerned. She was very angry with Macaula, Chief of the Bacas, because he had just killed a number of Pondos, and she inveighed against his conceit in having 22 wives, as he was too small a chief to have that number. I asked whether that was her only objection? She said, Yes; she thought it was presumptuous of him. She told me in the course of conversation it was difficult to explain, how earnestly she prayed for the Pondos when they invaded Bacaland. I asked, was not that rather hard on the Bacas, because they had done nothing wrong? I got no reply to this, and politeness as a guest prevented my saying that her prayers did not seem to have influenced the result, for although at first the Pondos, owing to their great numerical superiority, carried all before them, yet for some unaccountable reason they became panic-stricken, fled, and were slaughtered in great numbers by the pursuing Bacas.

[1] Colonel Sir Arthur Bigge, K.C.B., K.C.S.I.

Umquikela at first agreed to meet me on the 17th, but I had assented to it being altered to 8 a.m. on the 18th, explaining that I could not wait longer, as I was due at the Ixopo, 50 miles to the north-east of Kokstadt, on the 19th. At nine o'clock on the 18th I received a message asking me to wait till 2 p.m., and shortly after that hour Mrs. Jenkins, who was playing the part of "Sister Anne" in *Blue Beard*, triumphantly pointed out to me a crowd of natives coming over the hill about three-quarters of a mile distant. There, however, Umquikela remained, and nothing would induce him to come nearer. Mrs. Jenkins, his adopted mother, sent him many messages, and at five o'clock in the evening told me she fully admitted I had given him every chance, and said she thought it was of no use for me to remain; so I started on my 40-mile ride back to Kokstadt, which I reached before daylight, and at three o'clock that day was on the Ixopo, where General Thesiger came to dine and sleep, in the little inn. With the kind thought which he always had for others, he, although a teetotaler, brought down a couple of bottles of Perrier Jouet champagne. We stayed up most of the night talking of the Pondos, about whom, and also the Magistrates in the neighbourhood, the General wished to report to the High Commissioner. Before we parted it was nearly morning, and to my great pleasure he told me the Column might move on by easy marches towards Maritzburg, leaving behind two Companies of the Buffs, which were in the neighbourhood.

I brought to the attention of the General the fact that the Imperial Government was paying 30s. per diem for every waggon throughout the month we remained at Kokstadt, and urged that sufficient waggons and oxen should be purchased to complete with Regimental transport any force which might be sent into Zululand. This the General undertook to consider, and when on the 31st of August I rode into Maritzburg a few hours in advance of the Column, he told me the principle was approved, and I was to report to him the cost.

I left Maritzburg on the 7th September, having spent a week in formulating a scheme for Regimental transport, and on my way up country with my Staff officer, Captain E. R. P. Woodgate,[1] received authority to purchase sufficient to equip the

[1] General Woodgate was mortally wounded at Spion Kop, Natal, January 1900.

90th Light Infantry, at a cost of £60,000. On reaching Utrecht on the 17th, I inspected the Left Wing of the battalion, and found that the men were as badly provided with kit as were their comrades with whom I had been serving in the Amatola Mountains. Insufficient Regimental Necessaries had been brought out with the battalion—as previously stated. I had hoped that the Left Wing, which had been stationary, would be better equipped, but the Regimental reserve store of Necessaries landed with the companies consisted of four flannel shirts, and four mess tins, and no steps had been taken prior to my arrival to complete the men with equipment. The District Commandant, writing from Pieter-Maritzburg, at first resented my strong representations on the subject, but it was time that somebody spoke out, because 5 soldiers had just been sent up from the Base, not only unarmed, but unclothed. I was supported, however, by General Thesiger, and from that date until the end of the Zulu Campaign, my suggestion that no soldier should leave the Base without being properly equipped was carried out.

When I returned to Natal in 1881, I found the battalions had slipped back to the old state of unreadiness, for when I inspected two at Lang's Neck I found many of the men had only one, partly worn, pair of boots. There can be no doubt that the Regimental system of that time, which practically left all Supplies in the hands of the Quartermaster, and induced the Company officers to regard him as a Store holder who might be expected to produce anywhere, and at the shortest notice, anything required, was faulty.

The War Office arrangements left much to be desired. When the battalion was ordered out in consequence of the Gaikas having revolted, it might have been reasonably expected that the men would have to encamp, and possibly to fight. They were generally very young, for all recruits were embarked, and although there was an excellent system amongst the non-commissioned officers, yet many of the older ones were not allowed to go out. Thus the battalion was deprived of some of its most experienced old soldiers in order to save their passage money, which at the time might be taken as £12. Such maladministration was comparatively of little importance when fighting Gaikas, but it would have been serious if the

battalion had to meet the Zulu Army in the field soon after it disembarked. This our young soldiers did successfully twelve months later, but it was after marching 1000 miles, and living in what was, after we left the Perie Bush, a healthy climate, for, with proper sanitary arrangements and the absence of public-houses, the young soldiers improved out of recognition.

When I had looked round the little village of Utrecht, which possessed a Laager, or square walled enclosure, 10 feet high,—without loop-holes or platform from which men could fire over its walls; a magazine standing on an ironstone soil, with no lightning conductor,—and had taken the necessary and obvious steps to improve the situation, I rode on the 19th to Luneberg, a German Lutheran Mission Station 36 miles to the north-east. The pastor, the Reverend Mr. Filter, spoke English, but neither his family nor his flock spoke aught but German, so I had considerable colloquial practice for the next four days, during which I bought oxen, waggons, and Indian corn, at a cost of £2500. The average price of new waggons, with all their equipment, and a team of 18 oxen, varied from £260 to £300. I liked the straightforward ways of the German settlers, for, three days after I gave one of them a cheque for £270, he returned it to me, saying one of his cows had "lung sickness" and he feared that his oxen might be contaminated already, so he did not venture to send my purchase to Utrecht.

After some conversation with Mr. Filter and his family, I went to see Faku, the Chief sent by Cetewayo to frighten the Dutch settlers away from the border, which he had done effectually. I was curious to see the so-called military Kraal about which I had read while still in England. It was made of wattles, 6 feet in height, and 22 yards in diameter. He asked me, "Are you going to invade our country?" "No, not without orders; and so far as I know such orders are not contemplated." He was impressed by my being unarmed, carrying only a riding-whip, while he sat surrounded by twenty of his warriors. The result of my visit was that he sent to Cetewayo, saying he was satisfied that no immediate invasion of the country would be made from the Luneberg-Utrecht side, and the Maqulusi tribe, which had been assembled in the Inhlobane Mountains, was sent home.

Next day I started with my interpreter, Paliso, who had accompanied me from the Amatola district, Kaffraria, to ride southwards, and then along the Yagpad (hunting road). I intended to stop the night at Potter's store, 35 miles distant, on the Pemvane River, which, as I was told at Luneberg, the owner, from his friendship with the Maqulusi, had been able to keep open, although the district had been abandoned by the Dutchmen. When I reached it, however, I found it was practically empty, and its owner had left.

The Zulus were in a state of excitement: four regiments had recently gone to Ulundi on the King's summons, and four more were then moving down. The men to whom we spoke were so truculent in their behaviour, asking when the Germans were going to obey Cetewayo's orders and leave Luneberg, and showing, moreover, so strong a desire to take my kit, that I decided to go on another 35 miles until I got out of the disputed territory. In my 70-mile ride that day the result of Cetewayo's message was apparent, for there was only one farm-house with a roof on it, and most of the gardens and fields were being cultivated by Zulus. The mules pulling the Cape cart with my luggage were quite fresh at nightfall when I crossed the Blood River, but my three horses all showed signs of fatigue, and after I halted, the horse I bought at Cape Town, which had gone gaily up to that time, died after ten minutes' pain.

I spent the next ten days purchasing and organising transport, in obtaining which and some mealies I expended £10,000, which rose to over £50,000 by the 1st June 1879. I was obliged to employ my one Staff officer in examining roads, and thus I had to do more than I was really able to carry out to my satisfaction.

On the 1st October, General Thesiger wrote to me that the High Commissioner wished to encourage the Luneberg settlers to remain on their farms, in spite of Cetewayo's notice to quit, and asking me if I could raise a Volunteer force. I replied that this was impossible; and on the 16th, the General being away, his chief Staff officer, reiterating Sir Bartle Frere's wishes, directed me to be prepared to take the Utrecht garrison to Luneberg, and suggested that I should tell the Germans I was coming. Next day the High Commissioner writing to

me in the same strain, as had the General on the 1st October, explained his anxiety to prevent the Germans moving, and his hope that I would do all I could to help them, adding that, of course, he did not intend me to take any Military steps without the General's approval. He ended his letter by expressing his gratitude for the work I had done in Pondoland, and for my successful dealings with the Chiefs there. To the chief Staff officer I wrote that the main risk of the movement would lie in its being known in advance, and that if the troops arrived at Luneberg before the Zulus got warning, in my opinion nothing would happen; and in this view I was supported by the Landdrost of Utrecht, Mr. Rudolph, who knew the Zulus well.

During the first week in October, Witch doctors went round the kraals on the border, "doctoring" with charms the males who did not belong to the regiments summoned to Ulundi; and on the 14th, Mr. Rudolph warned me that unless I supported the Luneberg settlers at once they would leave, as the friendly Zulus in the neighbourhood, apprehensive of being massacred, had slept out of their kraals for several nights. On the 15th I forwarded the Landdrost's official letter to the chief Staff officer, explaining that, owing to the importance of keeping the Germans at Luneberg, which was our line of communication with Derby, and because of the number of friendly Zulus around the settlement whose service I wished to engage, I had decided to take two Companies there to support the Germans. I was urged to do so by a Dutchman named Piet Uys, whose acquaintance I made at this time, and whose father had been killed by Zulus at Weenen in 1838.

I wrote privately to the General the same day, saying I had considered the responsibility I incurred in leaving Utrecht for a day or two with only one Company (until the Company I had called up from Newcastle could arrive), and had come to the conclusion that if he were present he would approve of my action. I continued, "I believe many people will consider two Companies too few for Luneberg. I think we ought to have more; but if the Zulus come there, I hope our men will not fight less well than their predecessors did at Lucknow. It is possible you may not approve at Maritzburg of my action, but believing you would do so if you could see and hear all I see and hear, I feel I should be unworthy of the

confidence you put in me if I hesitated to do what I thought was right." My General, with the generosity with which he always treated me, replied, "You have taken a serious responsibility upon yourself, and I doubt very much if you have acted wisely. However, you may depend upon my backing you up, as of course, in your position, you are bound to act in whatever way you consider necessary under what, I presume, are very pressing circumstances." The High Commissioner, regarding my action in the Political point of view, wrote, "I think Colonel Evelyn Wood deserves our gratitude and acknowledgments for taking the responsibility and saving us from the disgrace of leaving the Germans without protection." Later, the Governor of Natal, who did not generally agree with Sir Bartle Frere's views, wrote to the same effect, saying that my action had effectually stopped any further raid.

I wrote to the General on the 22nd October: "I am sorry I have not your full approval of the course I have adopted, though with your usual kindness you support me. I thought it over for twenty-four hours. On the one hand, I incurred certain Military risks incidental to all warfare, and especially when engaged with such small forces as are usually employed against savages; on the other hand, I risked the almost certain abandonment of the Pongola Valley, involving the loss of the assistance of the farm Kafirs and separation from the Swazies. . . . Though I fully appreciate your generous kindness in endorsing my action, I am anxious, if ill results come from what I think was my duty, it should be known I acted after receiving a copy of your letter to Sir Bartle Frere.[1] I suppose you hardly realise how anxious your unvaried support makes me to act in accordance with your wishes. A 'safe man' would not have run the risk, but I did what I believe you would have told me to do if you had been here."

When Parliament met in February 1879, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, in answering a question put by a Member of the Opposition, explained Luneberg was outside the district on which there had been an arbitration, adding, "Colonel Wood could not have taken any other course consistently with his duty."

[1] This letter refuses the assistance on account of Military risks.

I started two Companies on the 16th October for Luneberg, but the next morning they had only got 7 miles on their journey, being stopped by the difficulties of a mountain-track over the Elandsberg—and it became necessary for me to join them, in order to ensure their progress, as I was anxious to get the Companies intrenched at Luneberg before the Border Zulus knew of the movement. By dint of considerable exertion they reached the Mission Station on the afternoon of the 18th. I had ridden into Luneberg on the 17th, when I had to undertake a distasteful task. I had purchased from Mr. Filter an ox, for the men's rations; but on my asking him to be good enough to have it killed, he said that was impossible, and that I must kill it myself. I asked, "Surely some of your farm Zulus will kill it?" "Yes, certainly," he assented; "but they will kill it as slowly as possible, inflicting as much pain as they can before the animal dies, transfixing it with assegais in non-vital places." I then tried to make my Fingoe interpreter, Paliso, slaughter the ox, but he absolutely declined, saying that he had never done such a thing; so, finally, I had to go in the kraal, and shoot it.

When I had settled the Companies in their camp, I sent to tell Manyoba (whose kraal was 5 miles from Luneberg, and who, in the absence of Faku, was Cetewayo's representative) that I wished to see him, but received no answer; and after waiting two hours I rode out to his kraal, accompanied by Paliso.

In the kraal there were women only, and they informed me that the Chief was away on a hill. About 2 miles off I saw a crowd of men, and suspecting it was Manyoba and his kindred, I went on. On riding up I found about 100 men sitting down, most of them with guns, and the remainder with assegais. I asked for Manyoba, but was assured that he was away. I knew that he had been seized by the Boers some years before, and imprisoned for a considerable time on account of cattle thefts, and believed he feared the same sort of treatment. One or two men came out of the crowd, and said they wanted to know why I wished to see their Chief. I explained that I had brought soldiers to Luneberg, not to attack the Zulus, or, indeed, to cross the border, but because Faku and, indeed, Manyoba had threatened to kill the

Germans unless they left the settlement. The Zulus wished to argue as to our rights, but this I declined, saying that as the Chief was not there, they could give him my message, and I should go back. I was riding away, when there came a shout of "Stop!" and Manyoba, surrounded by a guard of a dozen men, came forward. Two of the younger men caught up their guns, which were on the ground, but the Chief told them to put them down, saying, "They are only two." I stayed twenty minutes, and I think reassured Manyoba; but he must have had a strange idea of our power, to be nervous of one White and one Black man, when he was surrounded by 100 of his tribe.

CHAPTER XXVII

1878—PREPARATIONS FOR WAR

Purchasing Transport—Canvassing Boer leaders—Maude's accident—He is carried 45 miles—Lysons crows like a cock—Pretorius, a Boer leader—Benighted on the Veldt.

THE General having desired me to go to Wesselstroom, and ascertain whether it was possible to get any Dutchmen to come out in that district, in the event of a Zulu War, I went up on the 8th November, and was told by the Landdrost that the feeling was so hostile to the Imperial Government that he doubted any Dutchman coming out. He said if I could persuade Swart Dirks Uys and Andries Pretorius to join us, they would bring over many others. Piet Uys told me that the feeling of his countrymen was so intensely bitter that he doubted whether any of them would come out, but he would do his best to help, not because he loved us, but because he realised the importance of the Border question.

I left Captain Maude with Mr. Swart Dirks Uys to buy ponies, while I returned to Wesselstroom to purchase waggons. Mr. Henderson, the Field Cornet, accompanied me. He was riding a mare whose foal, only twelve days old, cantered along in front of us. I should have preferred to have travelled faster than the baby colt was able to go, but as Mr. Henderson had remained sixteen hours in Wesselstroom to show me his farm, I could not easily shake him off, though I foresaw that he would cost me the loss of valuable time, which indeed was the case. He had a beautiful farm, utilising the sources of the Pongolo River, and he detained us till a herd of 100 horses could be driven past for me to admire. Eventually, after losing three hours of valuable daylight, we left, and mounting a steep hill to the south of his farm we had a glorious view, over-

looking 40 miles towards Ulundi. There Mr. Henderson said "Good evening" to us, after pointing out the direction of his brother's house. We quickened our pace, for a storm threatened to break every minute. Coming to a very bad place on the side of a steep hill, I made Paliso and two 90th orderlies, Walkinshaw and Stringer, dismount and walk, holding back the mule cart, while I led the horses, and at 5.30 we reached a plateau where a streamlet crossed the track. Here I decided to halt, instead of making for Mr. Henderson's house, for rain was falling heavily, and lightning played vividly around us, attracted by the iron-stone which cropped out on the surface of the ground. We soon had a tent up, off-saddled, and unharnessed the mules, when we saw that the mule waggon was stuck on the spot where I had had the cart handled down. Maude walked up to see what was wrong, as a boy came in, saying, "Please, Sare, him waggon turn over." I sent up my servant Fox and two men, keeping one mule driver to catch the horses and mules, which we tied in a circle.

It was now quite dark, and rain was falling in torrents. I sent a Zulu for water, and put the men's rifles inside the tent. Taking one of T. White's [1] lanterns, I started soon after seven o'clock, with matches in my pocket, and one hand held carefully over a cracked pane of the lantern, but I found that not even a whole pane would keep the candle alight in the furious gusts that swept over me. I trudged on, but got off the track, and was even grateful to the lightning, which helped me to regain it. I found the men breathless from exertion. The waggon driver had lost his nerve, and fearing to drive against the scarped side of the hill, went over the edge of the road, and when Maude got up, the waggon was 30 feet down the slope, all four wheels in the air, and the mules entangled in a heap. When I reached the spot, they had got the limber on to the track, and the waggon body within 7 feet of it, having lifted it up by inches. I got down underneath, and in half an hour we raised it up, and then scotching the wheels, placed it on to the limber. The hill was so steep that the men could not carry up the loads, so they formed line, and passed up the articles. There were two sacks of "mealies" (Indian corn) which were too heavy for the men to carry, so I made Fox and Walkinshaw

[1] Messrs. T. White & Co., Outfitters, Aldershot.

take either end of the sacks, while I lay with my face against the side of the hill lower down, and with chest and elbows forced up the centre of the sacks, rolling them upwards. When we got the load (a very small one) up, I found that the driver and the mules were demoralised, and so decided to run the waggon down by hand. Two men went to the pole, but I said laughingly, "If anyone is to be killed over this job, it had better be an officer; you go behind," and as I tied the lantern, which belonged to my friend Woodgate, in front of the waggon, I added, "If the waggon fetches away, he will never see his lantern again." I took the pole, and at Maude's request let him help me. At the end of it there was a ring, through this we passed a reim,[1] and knotted it, each taking an end round our wrists. Although I did not anticipate the serious accident which ensued, I thought it would be safer if we "reimed" up the wheel, for which there was no drag chain, but our united strength failed to move the waggon, and so I was obliged to take off the reim, and with a strong pull we started it. For 30 or 40 yards we did well; then the waggon came faster, and presently, to my horror, I found we had lost control over it. It flashed across my mind that my jest might come true, as, though holding back all I could, I had to increase my pace. I realised in the darkness that Maude had stumbled by the increased weight on my arm. Running on my heels, I made a heavy tug at the pole, and hanging back drew the waggon so close to me that I felt the fore rack on my shoulder, and feared I should soon be like a pancake![2] As the waggon pressed more heavily on me, putting my left hand on the ledge of the hill, which was about the height of my waist, I vaulted better than I had ever done before, or have done since, rolling over above the waggon. As I scrambled on to the track I saw to my horror what seemed in the darkness to be a bundle, while the waggon, released from the guidance of my hand on the pole, turned to the right, and careered down the slope out of sight. Hastening to the bundle, I found it was Maude on his face, doubled up, senseless. When after some minutes he said, "Oh! my chest is knocked in!" I was so miserable that

[1] Rope made of ox hide.

[2] I measured the track next morning, and found I had taken the wheel to within 5 inches of the scarped outside of the hill.

I could not answer him. He murmured, "Lay me on my back." I sent a man down the hill after the waggon, to fetch a table. He brought back a broken half of it, on to which we lifted my friend. As we carried him down the hill, the front men being so much lower than those behind, Maude's body began to slip off, so I had to walk backwards, holding his feet, until I noticed Private Stringer was much exhausted, when I changed places with him. Now Paliso was 2½ inches taller than I, so I got an undue weight, and before I reached the tent had no breath left in my body. We placed Maude on the bed in the tent, cutting off his clothes, he groaning all the time. I poured some brandy and water down his throat, and put a hot-water bottle to his feet, which were icy.

I then wrote a hasty note to Major Clery at Luneberg, and sent Private Stringer and Paliso off with it. It was 25 miles away, on a track neither of them had ever seen, and although the rain had ceased, the mist was so thick it was difficult to see 50 yards off. They had, however, the guiding line of a mountain range, and a river along which they rode. I said to Stringer as they started, "You must ride till you and your horse drop from fatigue to get a doctor, and his quiet "Yes, sir," assured me that if he failed it would only be from one of these causes. As they disappeared in the mist, I shouted, "Borrow some of the officers' horses, and come back at once." They reached Luneberg about 3 a.m., and Stringer announced that he was then ready to start back, while the Kafir lay down and could with difficulty be aroused. He was a Fingoe, and had, moreover, ridden 16 miles with me in the morning, while Stringer had been in camp.

When I got back to Maude, I found he was able to speak, and ask for tea or soup, which I gave him through the tube of my syphon eye-douche; and about one o'clock I lay down and tried to sleep, but every time Maude moved, or groaned, he awoke me. About five in the morning he asked for cocoa, and I wrote a note to Mr. Henderson, whose house was close to us, for some Kafirs to pull out the waggon. I collected some articles from the wreck—the men's tent, and horse food, and washed more dirt off my friend's face. When the doctor arrived he declared that, as far as he could see, there was no serious damage; the wheels had passed over Maude's chest,

and he was very sore all over. When the Kafirs were ready we lifted him on to the stretcher, but he groaned so much from his weight pressing against the sides, that I stopped at Mr. Henderson's and got the loan of a rough bedstead, placing that on the stretcher. We were very tired, and the Zulus occasionally kept step, which gave poor Maude the movement of being tossed in a blanket. As night fell, and with it rain, I decided to make my way into an empty house we found on the way. We got into Utrecht—45 miles—on the following evening, and at the end of ten days my friend was at work again.

I was up early on the 21st November, and arranged for my Cape cart to start with our baggage at 1.30; but about eleven o'clock Captain Woodgate came in, and said that both the drivers were drunk, and nobody else could catch the mules. I observed philosophically, "Perhaps one may be sober by 1.30, which will be plenty of time, and one driver can get the cart to Newcastle, so send the more sober of the two."

I was harried all the forenoon by pressing business, but, to my delight, Major Moysey, Royal Engineers, came to join, and thus I was relieved of one part of my manifold duties. A succession of people,—the Principal Medical Officer, the Landdrost, and various Settlers, and Captain McLeod, my assistant, the Agent[1] accredited to the King of the Swazis,—occupied the time until 3 p.m., when, just as I was starting, Faku, Cetewayo's representative near Luneberg, and another Induna, arrived with an important message. The message was amusing: the Zulu Monarch declared that, when he sent orders for the Germans to leave Luneberg, he did not know it was Transvaal territory; but that now he was aware of it, he would make Umbeline keep his people in order, and so perhaps I would be good enough to withdraw the soldiers. I declined this request, but consoled the Ambassador with a present of tobacco. At the close of the interview the post arrived with important letters from the General, one putting the 13th Light Infantry under my orders.

At 4.30 p.m. I started, with my Orderly officer, Lieutenant Harry Lysons.[2] The Cape cart had 27 miles to go, but Lysons knew a short cut, and a ford across the

[1] I had been appointed Political Agent for North Zululand and Swaziland in October.

[2] Son of my friend, General Sir Daniel Lysons.

Buffalo River, just south of where it is joined by the Incandu and Ingagane Rivers. We cantered to the Buffalo, 12 miles, without drawing rein, well under two hours, including a stop at a Fingoe's kraal, from whom I hoped to buy mealies. He was a prosperous settler from the Cape Colony, speaking English well. The day was now closing in, and after we were across the river, Lysons hesitated. He had guided me as straight as a line drawn on the map hitherto, but the ground on the right bank of the Buffalo is difficult to understand, and there is no doubt that, having crossed the main stream once, we kept too far to our right, and came back to it. We now realised we were wrong; but after turning northwards, darkness came over us, and "our rest" became, not "stones," but puddles. Vainly attempting to read my compass, for it was now quite dark, we plodded on at a walk. Light rain fell incessantly, and a black cloud, the precursor of heavy storms, blotted out every star, and compelled us to dismount and feel for footpaths, which crossed and recrossed each other in the most bewildering manner.

About eight o'clock we came to a river, the whirling waters of which we could just distinguish lying below us, with steep banks on either side. After wandering up and down for twenty minutes, our horses jumping round every few minutes, when the flashes of lightning were more than usually vivid, I found a place where oxen had descended, and holding the horses I sent Lysons down to explore, as on the far bank we thought we saw a light. He slipped twice going down, and when he reached the water, being nervous he might be drowned, I called to him to take off his waterproof coat, adding that, as I should probably not hear him, I would sing loudly until his return. I waited an hour, the horses turning round and sliding about, endeavouring to get their faces away from the rain, and after the first quarter of an hour I sang "Far Away" till I was tired of the tone of my voice, but could not hear a sound. I began to calculate the chances of my ever getting "War-Game" and Lysons' pony down the bank, and came to the conclusion that I should either lose my Orderly officer or my horse, who constantly rested his nose on my shoulder. When the heavy rain came on about five o'clock, I had shifted my un-read English letters from my pocket to my wallets; but

now, thinking I ought to try and find Lysons, even though I lost my horse, I put the letters back in my pockets, fearing, however, to find them in a shapeless pulp in the morning. Just then Lysons greeted me so cheerily from the opposite bank, I thought he must have a Kafir with him, but when, having again waded across the river, he rejoined me, he said he could not find the lights, and he believed he had wandered in a circle. As he reported very badly of the descent, we led the horses up stream for 300 yards, but the banks being more unfavourable we returned. So far as I could make out from my watch, it was about eleven p.m. A heavy storm, obscuring everything, obliged us to stand still, and I sat down and slept for ten minutes, but a loud peal of thunder frightening "War-Game," made him jump so violently as to hurt my arm, which I had passed through the reins. I then decided to try and descend step by step, utilising the lightning for a light. I went down the bank, "War-Game" following me like a dog. It was nervous work walking exactly in front of him, but unless I did so he would not advance a foot! When he reached the water I rewarded him with a piece of sugar, which I generally carried for my horses.

We got across the river about midnight, and after wandering for about an hour in and out of small ravines, another storm compelled us to halt. We lay down as close to each other as we could for warmth; but as "War-Game" jumped at every vivid flash of lightning, and pulled at my arms, I could not sleep. Lysons slept, not soundly, but still he did sleep. I stood up from about 12.30 a.m. till 4 a.m. wondering occasionally which of the two shivered most, master or horse. I felt nervously at my letters every five minutes to see whether they were still dry. About 4 a.m. the water was so deep under Lysons I made him get up, and he presently heard a cock crow, towards which we led our horses. After walking for ten minutes I asked, "Do you hear him now?" "No, not at all. Shall I challenge?" He then screamed such a cock-a-doodle-do that my horse jumped into the air, and nearly knocked Lysons over; but his challenge was immediately answered, and ten minutes' walk brought us to a Kraal. After much shouting we got a Kafir out, and I let off my only Zulu sentence, asking the way to Newcastle. I could not

say "Come and show us," but a half-crown in my left hand, and a grip of his neck with my right, indicated what I wanted, and the Kafir trotted off, bringing us to the bank of a river, through which we waded with some difficulty. The water came in over the top of my boots, Lysons on his pony going in up to his waist. When we got to the far side, being now sure of the track, I threw the half-crown to the astonished Kafir, who probably never earned one so easily before, and we cantered into Newcastle.

After an hour's sleep, and having had some breakfast, we drove northwards, but the jolting of the Cape cart was intolerable. Presently, looking back, I observed a farmer following us in a "Spider."[1] I knew him as a man who had ox-waggons for sale, and suggested he should take me into his carriage. This he did, and in a four hours' drive I learnt a good deal about Colonial life. While we sheltered in one of his farms, occupied by a Dutchman, who could not speak a word of English, but who made some tea for us, frying beef and eggs together in one pan, we escaped one of the heaviest storms I ever saw. I have often read with incredulity travellers' stories of hail-stones being as large as walnuts, and can scarcely, therefore, hope my readers will believe my statements when I say that I have seen many such under the Drakensberg range of mountains. I bought a span of oxen during the storm, and then started again at three o'clock. The farmer was to have taken us a short cut, but what was generally a little rivulet was now a whirling river, and we had to go round by the ordinary track.

We stopped that night at Meek's farm, 30 miles north of Newcastle, and next morning, rising at daybreak, got the loan of the Spider and two of Mr. Meek's ponies. The ground was heavy, and neither animal would pull, so we started in a somewhat undignified fashion, my Orderly officer pushed the cart behind, while Paliso, the interpreter, and I hauled on the shafts until we got up the hill, and could start with the advantage of the downward incline.

When we reached the farm of Andries Pretorius, there were twenty of his kindred awaiting my arrival. They were all surly, and although it is customary in that part of the

[1] A light four-wheeled American carriage.

country for the host and his family to come out and assist in unharnessing a guest's horse, nobody offered to help, except Pretorius. He apologised for his kindred, explaining they detested the sight of an Englishman. He was careful to impress on me, however, that were I not his guest he would be equally discourteous. He had a remarkable face, hard, resolute, and unyielding. When we went in—Mr. Meek interpreting—I explained the object of my visit. "I know," I said, "there is a strong feeling against the Imperial Government, but you have many relatives on the border, and their farms, now valueless, will be very valuable when we settle the question." Pretorius replied: "We have sworn an oath to be true to Messrs. Kruger and Joubert, who went to England to see your Government, and we will not move till we hear the answer to the deputation, and we will not help you till the Transvaal is given back to us." "I shall not, then, have the pleasure of your assistance."

We talked for two hours as "friends." Pretorius argued on the Annexation question, and, as I thought, got the worst of it. He said, "You came into my house, saying 'How dirty it is; turn out.' And now you cannot clean one little room named Sekukuni! And what a small broom you have got, to try and sweep up Cetewayo! He will destroy that broom." I observed, "Well, your house was very dirty, and tumbling down; moreover, it had just then taken fire. My house was next yours, and as you could not put out your fire, I was obliged to try to do it. It is true that the broom was not large enough to sweep up Sekukuni, and it may be destroyed in sweeping up Cetewayo, but my Queen can send out 45 Regiments instead of the 5 stationed here, and if the little broom is destroyed you will soon see more brooms." "But why do you light a big fire before you put out a little one?" "We hope when we put out the big fire, that the little one will go out of itself." "Then," said he, "tell me honestly—do you prefer to have with you your own soldiers, or Dutchmen, when fighting Natives?" "For shooting Natives and taking cattle, I prefer Dutchmen. In the Perie Bush, in Kaffraria, I had 300 Dutchmen in my command, but when I had a position to carry, and the Kafirs were standing up to us, I took soldiers. In four months I never had a Dutchman killed

in action." Although this honest opinion was not appreciated by Pretorius or by his family, we had much conversation, and finally, when I left the farm, all the Dutchmen came out and expressed the hope that personally I might come safely out of the Zulu War.

I did not abandon the General's scheme, on account of this failure, and when at the end of November the Staff at Maritzburg wrote that the Cabinet had finally decided not to accede to the General's request for reinforcements, expressing the hope that war would be avoided, I made an effort to win over the Dutchmen living in the Wakkerstroom and Utrecht districts. On the 4th December, after a conference which lasted from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., I induced some of them to say that in the event of war they would accompany me. The man of most influence won over was Piet Uys,[1] who, for himself and his sons and nephews, declined to receive pay.

I spent the next three weeks in purchasing transport, and having sketches made of all tracks leading over the Transvaal frontier towards Ulundi.

[1] Extract from a letter from Lord Chelmsford to Colonel Evelyn Wood:—

"MARITZBURG, 10*th December* 1878.

"You have done wonders with the Dutchmen, and I am quite sure the High Commissioner will be as much obliged to you from a Political point of view as I am from a Military one.—CHELMSFORD."

Sir B. Frere to the Secretary of State for the Colonies:—

"MARITZBURG, 23*rd December* 1878.

"I have but little doubt but that the firm, conciliatory, and judicious treatment of these gentlemen by Colonel Evelyn Wood will have an excellent effect, not only locally, but generally throughout the South-eastern Transvaal districts.—B. FRERE."

CHAPTER XXVIII

CHRISTMAS 1878.—THE INVASION OF ZULULAND

A woman the ultimate cause of the Zulu War—Preparations for a campaign—Christmas Day—Forming an advanced base—A disappointing Honours gazette—Conference with Lord Chelmsford—I decline to be Resident in Zululand—Seketwayo's vacillation—Captain Woodgate's indifference to danger—We defeat the Makulusi, Nodwengu, and Udloko Regiments, and hear of Isandwhlana—Boers as waggoners—They pull over a champion team in a Tug-of-war.

SIR THEOPHILUS SHEPSTONE came to stay with me, Christmas Eve 1878, for three days, and gave me much valuable information about the Zulus. He was particularly kind, and I appreciated it the more because the High Commissioner having made me a Political Agent for North Zululand and Swaziland, had virtually taken the control of our policy in those countries, as regards the natives, out of his hands. This, however, increased my work, and I had more than I could do. My diary shows that at 6.30 a.m. I was inspecting Mounted infantry, and a more ragged crew perhaps was never got together, except the professional beggars on a stage. I was much dissatisfied, for the first horse I looked at was about to get a sore back, his saddle cloth being twisted up under the saddle. Many of the men had only 10 rounds of ammunition, instead of 75. I got back to breakfast at 8 a.m, when Captain Barton[1] rode in from Major Buller's camp, where he was doing good work, which justified my recommendation of him for Special service. During breakfast time, a hurried meal, I gave him instructions, as he was going to Wesselstroom to buy horses, grain, and vegetables. At nine o'clook I had a second inspection of the 90th Light Infantry, looking at

[1] Coldstream Guards, serving in Frontier Light Horse; he was Aide-de-Camp to Sir Hope Grant at Aldershot in 1870–1871.

every man's boots, which were unsatisfactory; this took till 11.30. My excellent Major was much vexed by my telling him that the kits of no two companies were laid out in the same manner, for this, though perhaps not of great importance in itself, takes the inspecting officer more time. Nor were his men's "small books" signed for the previous month. Then I passed on, telling the Royal Engineer officer what was required in the Laager to make it defensible.

The Landdrost now appeared, with the Townspeople, and asked how many soldiers were to be left to protect them. "I am not going to leave any, except the halt and the maimed." "The Townspeople can defend the Laager, and the halt and maimed my stores, and if I lose them it won't much matter to me." One of the local leaders said, "If you lose your stores you will starve!" I replied, "I shall have two months' supplies at Balte Spruit, 20 miles in advance; and all I promise the Utrecht Townspeople is a decent burial on my return." Then the Senior doctor came and asked me our plan of campaign. Surgeon-Major Cuffe, however, was a good organiser, and took all trouble in that respect off my hands. Then a Captain came and told me he could not work with his Senior officer, and must leave him. I suspected that the complainant had a hot temper, but sent him to work on Transport duty. Next, Major Clery appeared,[1] and said that Captain Barton had annexed a waggon. The dispute turned on a point of grammar. Clery wrote, "Send them back." Barton read this to mean "oxen." Clery meant "waggon and oxen." They both quoted Lindley Murray at length. Captain Woodgate then wanted me to look at, and buy, two horses which were outside. I told him to ask Clery to buy, or reject, the horses. At this moment I was reminded that I was to give an address on the Zulu nation and its army on the following Friday night, to which I had not yet given a thought! When I could obtain ten minutes without interruption, I was considering how to equip 1000 natives without any means at hand. To this number I later added another 1000, and as officers speaking Zulu had to be found, as well as blankets, guns, and something to carry powder and bullets, or ammunition, it will be understood the work was of an engrossing nature.

[1] Now Major-General Sir C. Clery, K.C.B.

I began work at daylight on Christmas Day 1878, and went to a Church parade at 7 a.m., and then did some odd jobs till 8.30, when we had a Sacrament service, for which Major Buller and Captain Barton rode in ten miles. It was pleasant to see our boldest polo players, who had hustled me the previous evening, Bright, Hotham, and Lysons, at the service. All three were fine bold boys; Bright had been the stroke oar of the Eton Eight. They came in to breakfast, which caused some little difficulty about knives and forks, as Sir Theophilus Shepstone was still with me. He worked with me for a couple of hours after breakfast, and then I did business with the doctors and commissariat.

I saw my guest off about midday, but when I returned from a ride to Major Buller's camp, I found that Sir Theophilus had come back, for his mule driver was drunk, and all the mules were lost. This was, however, my gain, as I could not see too much of my guest, and it cleared up our relations. He wrote to me later from Newcastle, he had previously imagined Sir Bartle Frere was under the impression that he was not supporting me; the idea was, however, erroneous. Sir Theophilus and I had disagreed as to putting in force the Transvaal Commando law. He thought it would be better to make it applicable to Whites and Blacks, and I wanted it enforced only for Natives, in order to obtain drivers and foreloupers for my waggons, and the black men who formed Wood's regiment, many of whom, however, came voluntarily, as indeed they well might, at 1s. a day. I always received the warmest support from Sir Theophilus, and the misunderstanding was caused, I think, by my diffidence in expressing, after so short a residence in the country, any opinion which did not coincide with that of one who had spent his life in South Africa.

On the 26th December I started a Company, 13th, and one of the 90th Light Infantry with a convoy of waggons to fill up Balte Spruit, a position I had selected 20 miles to the southward of Utrecht. About midday I received a message from Captain Woodgate that all the waggons were stuck in a ravine 10 miles distant, and later it became necessary to encamp a company at three different places to assist the oxen when they were unable to "pull out" by themselves.

At the end of the month I got a very kind letter from the

General—now Lord Chelmsford—relative to the Gazette of Honours and Rewards for the Operations in the Amatola Mountains, which had just been received.[1]

The confidence which the General gave me enabled me to urge a more concentrated advance than he had at first intended, and this was eventually adopted, as was another suggestion I made, that we should purchase all the Transport we might require, as being not only a cheaper arrangement, but the only feasible plan to ensure success. Any disappointment I felt about the Gazette was mitigated by the fact that several officers whom I had recommended received promotion, including two in the 90th Light Infantry. Some other selections, although made, no doubt, on what appeared to those in Pall Mall adequate grounds, caused much amusement in the Colony, for of two of the Seniors who became Companions of the Bath, one had been relegated to the command of 30 privates and the Regimental band, 500 miles from the scene of action, and the other assumed charge of a few loyal natives in a peaceful district.

The Military Secretary treated me with great kindness, and allowed me to write to him freely, so I urged on his attention the omission of Brevet Major Hackett's name; and took the opportunity of telling Sir Alfred Horsford that the delay in gazetting me to the command of the Regiment had caused me to serve ten months in South Africa at 2s. a day less pay than Captain Woodgate, or indeed any of the captains employed on Special service, received.

When my last company joined at Utrecht, the officer in command informed me he had heard all his way up that Colonel Wood was a wonderful judge of oxen. This was an unfounded reputation, for I knew very little about cattle. I had no Veterinary Surgeon, and was therefore obliged to look closely at every beast myself; but the average price and quality was undoubtedly satisfactory.

The incessant work, however, now began to tell on me, and my glands swelled as they had done when I was over-

[1] He wrote: "I was sorry not to see your name in Orders for some reward, for all your good service, and for the help you have given me, but it is only deferred. Your loyal and excellent work will not, and shall not, go unrewarded, if I have anything to say to it."

worked in the Amatola Mountains, although for pleasure and on principle I played either lawn-tennis or polo for an hour or two every evening, the subalterns of the 90th being always available for a game.

On the 1st January one of my spies informed me that Cetewayo had assured Sirayo that he should not be given up to the British Government. Sirayo was not himself in fault, but the action of his sons, and especially of the elder, Melokazulu,[1] was the ultimate cause of Cetewayo's downfall.

Sirayo, whose district was on the borders of Zululand, adjoining the Buffalo River, had, like all important chiefs, many wives, and two of the younger ones absconded with young Zulus resident in Natal. Melokazulu followed with an armed party, and surrounding the kraal, took the women back into Zululand, where he shot them. In the following year I asked him in the course of conversation why he did not shoot the men, and he answered simply, "Oh, my father did not pay for them as he did for the women, for whom he gave cattle, and besides, the men were subjects of the British Government." "Did your father know that you had gone after the wives?" "No." "Did he approve of your having shot them?" "I don't know. I told him they were dead, and he made no remark."

I moved what was now called No. 4 column, consisting of the 13th and 90th Light Infantry, 4 guns, a varying number of horsemen, on the 3rd January to Balte Spruit, near the Blood River, which we crossed on the 6th, after hearing that Cetewayo had not accepted the terms offered by the High Commissioner.

I received a letter on the 9th January from the General, requesting me to move down and demonstrate to the southward, to take pressure off him as he crossed the Buffalo, and also, if he was unopposed, to meet him personally about halfway from our respective positions.

I told the Zulus in our neighbourhood, and as far east as the White Umvolosi, that they must decide before daylight on the 11th January whether they intended to be friends, or foes. When, after the 11th, Colonel Buller seized a large number of cattle, I asked some of the Zulus why they had not driven

[1] Reported as killed in Bambaata's rebellion, June 1906.

them off, and they answered, "Oh, we never thought you would begin on the day you mentioned."

On the evening of the 10th, I moved with about two-thirds of the column, having laagered and entrenched one-third, towards Rorke's Drift. It rained incessantly, and the Blood River behind us, usually only 3 feet deep, became 11 feet in the course of a few hours, while it was impossible to move a waggon over slight watercourses, without putting on 50 men to help the oxen. I started at 2.30 a.m. for the Itilezi, and soon after nine o'clock met Lord Chelmsford on the Nkonjane Hill, 9 miles from Rorke's Drift. No. 3 column had started the previous day, but the difficulties of crossing the Buffalo were considerable.

I had an interesting talk with Lord Chelmsford for three hours, while Colonel Buller was sweeping up cattle to the south of the General's line of advance. After we had discussed the many affairs in which we had been interested since we met three months earlier, he pressed me, in the name of the High Commissioner, to accept the office of Resident of Zululand. I urged that the Resident ought to speak the language, and that, moreover, I was too fond of soldiering to leave the 90th Light Infantry for Political employment. He was greatly pleased to learn that I had got forty-two days' supplies for man and beast at Balte Spruit, besides a week's rations I had with me, as No. 3 column had only collected fifteen days'. Mr. Hughes, my Commissariat officer, had been indefatigable in adding to my stores, for which purpose he had been sent three weeks earlier from the Transvaal.

Before I left Lord Chelmsford, I warned him that, according to the information given by my spies, the first serious Zulu attack would fall on the column which he was accompanying. Three days later, on the 14th, I informed His Lordship that no forward movement had been made from Ulundi, but on the 17th I wrote, "My spies say that the Zulu Army," or, as they expressed it, "Cetewayo, is moving westward."

On the 14th January I sent to tell Seketwayo, a Chief of considerable importance, who had been negotiating with me since the 2nd, that I could no longer herd the 2000 head of cattle we held taken from his territory, but if he would come in, he should have them. The matter was complicated,

as a considerable number of the cattle belonged to Cetewayo, or rather to the Royal House. The Chief could not make up his mind, and having waited five days I sent the cattle away to the Free State, where they were sold.

Being uneasy concerning Zulus to the north of our left flank, I directed Colonel Buller to send there the Frontier Light Horse under Captain Barton, who took between 500 and 600 head of cattle, clearing the Pemvane and lower Bevane Rivers, while the column was moving forward slowly, much impeded by heavy rain, to the Umvolosi.

I had obtained the General's approval to my going in a north-easterly direction to clear the Ityenteka Range, including the Inhlobane mountain, of Zulus under Umsebe and Umbeline, hoping to be back before the General was ready to advance with No. 3 column. Having reached the Umvolosi River on the 19th, we built a fort at Tinta's Kraal, which, humanly speaking, should have been impregnable if held by two companies, and off-loading seventy waggons I sent them in the afternoon back towards Balte Spruit, escorted by Captain Wilson's company of the 90th, with orders to fill up the waggons and return to Tinta's Kraal, where I intended to leave him, and a company of the 13th.

About 7 o'clock in the evening I got a note from Colonel Buller, saying that he had been engaged for some hours on the Zunguin mountain with several hundred of the Makulusi tribe, who were pressing him back, and, as he was writing at sunset, had crossed in small numbers to the right bank of the Umvolosi. This disturbed me considerably, for they were now within a few miles of our empty waggons, and it was not only the chance of the loss of the company and £21,000 worth of property, but it would have been difficult to replace the waggons. I knew that the Convoy was not more than 3 or 4 miles off, for there was a muddy ravine which could only be passed with difficulty, and that Captain Wilson intended to begin to cross it at daylight.

Captain Woodgate, seeing I was perturbed, asked me the reason, and on reading to him Colonel Buller's note, at once went to the Company, although we were just going to have something to eat. He had the oxen inspanned at once, the drivers and foreloupers on learning the news being anxious

to get away to a place of safety. His unconsciousness of danger was shown by handing his horse to a Zulu when he dismounted to help the waggons across the ravine, with the result that he never saw it again for three days. Nothing of importance, however, occurred, for Colonel Buller, by showing a bold front to the Makulusi, held them on the river, and they retired after dark to their stronghold on the highest part of the mountain.

On the night of the 20–21st we made a long night march with the 90th Light Infantry, two guns and the mounted men starting at 11 p.m., and at daylight climbed the western end of the Zunguin mountain, along which we advanced during the day, taking some cattle and driving 1000 Zulus off it, they retiring to the Nek connecting it with the Inhlobane. Looking down from the eastern extremity, we saw about 4000 Zulus drilling under the Ityenteka Nek; they formed in succession a circle, triangle, and square, with a partition about eight men thick in the centre.

We descended at night for water, and rejoined the 13th, the 90th Light Infantry having been nineteen hours out of the twenty-four under arms, and having covered a considerable distance. In mileage, however, it was not so great as the distance covered by Wilson's company escorting the waggons, which filled up at once and returned to the Umvolosi, marching 34 miles in twenty-six hours.

We heard the guns[1] fired at Isandwhlana, 50 miles off, that evening as we sat round a camp fire.

There was a thick mist on the morning of the 24th which delayed our advance, but when it cleared we moved forward and came under fire from Zulus hidden in the rocks under the south-western point of the Inhlobane. Leaving the 90th and two guns to follow the waggon track with the baggage, I went to the right with the 13th Light Infantry, Piet Uys and his troop of 40 Burghers, with whom I was disappointed, as it was necessary for Piet and myself to ride in front to

[1] These were fired by Lord Chelmsford's troops returning from Sirayo's district to the wrecked camp. Our Senior officers asked my opinion, what was the probable cause, and I said guns fired after dark indicated, I apprehended, an unfavourable situation.

induce his men to go on to cover the advance of the guns. When we reached the rocks from whence the fire had come, it was clear we could not hope to get the guns down, so, after driving back a few Zulus who were in broken ground, I turned northwards, and went to a hill under which I had ordered the 90th to halt with the waggons and outspan. When I got there the oxen had just been loosened from the Trek-tow, but to my great vexation they were without any guard, and the 90th, which ought to have been with them, was three-quarters of a mile in front, advancing rapidly in line, without any supports, against some 4000 Zulus.[1] I looked up the ravine, which farther to the southward had stopped my onward progress with the 13th Light Infantry and guns, and was concerned to see about 200 Zulus coming down it towards the 90th's Ammunition carts, which had been left with some bugler boys, who had no firearms. I had just told an orderly to call Colonel Buller, when I was accosted by a Kafir who had ridden 48 miles from Utrecht bringing a note from Captain Gardner, recounting the disaster of Isandwhlana, of which he had been an eye-witness. Buller came to me at once, and telling him in one sentence of the misfortune which had befallen No. 3 column, I sent him up the ravine to drive back the Zulus, while I galloped to the 90th and expressed a strong opinion to the Senior officer—not belonging to the Regiment—who had contravened my orders. The Zulus in front of them made no stand. The young soldiers were very steady, and expended less than two rounds of ammunition per man; but the Zulus fled from the sight of the advancing line, and went ten paces to one covered by our men. The Frontier Light Horse and the Dutchmen pursued them until they climbed the Inhlobane mountain, and then after a halt of two hours I ordered the column to fall in, and, against the advice of some of the senior officers, read to the men the note I had received.

[1] It appeared later I had greatly under-estimated the Zulu force, imagining it was the Makulusi regiment only, but the High Commissioner learnt from his agent, and reported to the Secretary of State, not only was the Makulusi routed and dispersed, but that the Nodwengu and Udloko regiments shared in their fate. Later, Sir Bartle Frere wrote: "The Zulus are greatly impressed with the skill with which this force (Colonel Wood's) has been handled, and are afraid it may push on to the Inhlazatze, and threaten the Royal Kraal."

We moved back as far as our camp of the previous day, and next morning returned to our fort on the Umvolosi River. I was now in some difficulty. I did not want to abandon Supplies, and I had 70 loads for which I had no waggons. The Dutchmen, who were well provided with waggons, and were themselves wonderful drivers of oxen, came to my aid. Piet Uys and his men, who had only about 1000 lbs. weight on each waggon, loaded up to 8000 lbs., and then we moved slowly westwards, halting on the 28th at Venter's Drift, where I was within reach of firewood, our greatest want in that part of the country. There were trees growing in the ravines south of the Ngaba Ka Hawane Mountain.

Here I received a considerate note from Lord Chelmsford, giving me a brief account of the disaster at Isandwhlana, and telling me I had a free hand to go anywhere or adopt any measures I might think best, ending: "You must now be prepared to have the whole of the Zulu Army on your hands any day. . . . No. 3 Column, when re-equipped, is to subordinate its movements to your column. Let me know how it can assist you." I replied to Lord Chelmsford on the 31st January that I was in a position on Kambula Hill which I anticipated being able to hold even against the whole of the Zulu Army. I understood he did not wish me to incur risk by advancing, and I would not move unless it became necessary to do so in order to save Natal.

In spite of the carriage for stores lent to us by the Dutchmen, we had some trouble before we succeeded in finding a good military and sanitary Position, and even to men who did not feel much compassion for oxen, to make them pull 8000 lbs. through swamps is trying to their feelings as well as to the oxen's hides. It has often been a wonder to soldiers in South Africa how the Dutch, under Pretorius and other leaders forty years earlier, took waggons up and down mountains which appear to us impracticable for wheel traffic, but the maximum weight in a waggon on Commando was 1500 lbs., five adults being allowed a waggon between them, which of course made a great difference on a bad track. The difficulties of transport caused me to halt every second or third day, as I was obliged to make two journeys with my loads, and I soon had warning that I could not remain in the valley of the Umvolosi, by the loss of

horses and oxen, followed by that of a man of the 90th, who died of very rapid enteric fever.

The Military situation, although I tried to conceal the fact, affected my health. I never slept more than two or three hours at a time, going round the sentries for the next three months at least twice every night. We shifted camp five times before we finally took up the position in which the greater part of the Zulu Army attacked us on the 29th March, and as we constructed slight entrenchments in every camp, and improved the formation of the encampment so as to obtain the greatest amount of fire from all sides, the men were kept employed, and gained valuable experience. We worked on Sundays, saying our prayers in a practical manner, for I had Divine Service parade on ground immediately adjoining the spot where two companies were at work throwing up redoubts, and let the men put down their picks and shovels and join in the Service, which, during the sixteen months in which I either read it myself or caused one of the Staff officers to do so, never kept the men standing more than ten minutes, and I have never seen soldiers so attentive.

From December 1878 I had Native scouts 20 miles in front of our Force, and patrols 6 miles out an hour before daylight, but in the afternoon we amused ourselves, although the early morning was a period of anxiety. My spies informed me of impending attacks, which were predicted for each new and full moon, which periods are held by the Zulus to be auspicious. Mounted men were stationed 6 miles in front by day, and two companies beyond our cattle at grass. The arrangements for security during night were peculiar. It rained regularly when the sun went down, throughout the months of February and March, which added to our difficulty of ensuring security without impairing the health of the soldiers. To save them, the outlying pickets were allowed tents pitched in a circle, 200 yards outside the Laager. Groups of 8 men were placed 100 yards farther out, 6 lying down under blanket shelters, while 2 watched and listened. Beyond on the paths most convenient for the enemy's approach, under a British officer, were small parties of Zulus,[1] whose marvellous hearing by night, and sight

[1] They were drawn from the Border Zulus I enlisted at Luneberg in November, and attached to battalions, 6 to each company; their powers of hearing were extra-

by day, enhanced the value of our precautions. After the disaster on the Intombe these men asked to speak to me, and said: "We want to go home to our families, for you are going to be attacked by the whole of the Zulu Army." "Well, that is just the reason why you should stop with me; I have been paying you all these months, and you have never yet been in danger." "Oh, we are not nervous about ourselves, you are sure to repulse the attack, but some of the Cetewayo's men will sweep round in Raiding parties on both flanks, and kill our women and children, who are near Luneberg." "I promise you I will insure your wives and your cattle if any harm comes to them while you are with me," on which they saluted and went back to the kitchen fires quite content.

It is interesting that at some Athletic sports on the 19th February, in the country pastime of throwing the assegai, the Zulus, who since Chaka's time had been taught not to throw long distances, but to rush on their foe and stab him with the short assegai, were easily beaten, the first prize being won by a Hottentot about 5 foot in height, who propelled an assegai 70 yards, the second man being a Colonial born Englishman, while no Zulu threw an assegai farther than 50 yards.

Our team in the Tug-of-war, which had only been once defeated, was thoroughly beaten by Piet Uys and his Dutchmen. In 1872, when we were at Aldershot, I wished the battalion to enter a team for Divisional Athletic sports. I could get no volunteers, the battalion had never pulled in a Tug-of-war, and showed no inclination to begin; eventually I had to appeal to the Sergeant-Major, who practically coerced the Colour Sergeants into producing one man a company. When I looked at them, selecting a man who seemed to be about my own size, I said: "I do not think you will be much good for this job,—I doubt whether you can pull me over."

ordinary; they could see farther than we could with field glasses,—their vision was surpassed only by the telescope. They lived near the battalion cooking fires, and were the cause of considerable difficulty with respect to their clothing. I could not buy soldiers' greatcoats in Africa, but it was the dumping ground of cast-off full dress uniforms of the British Army, and I obtained from Maritzburg old Cavalry tunics, those of the Heavy Dragoon Guards being the only ones into which the Zulus could squeeze their bodies, and in these it was only the top buttons that would meet.

"I can do that, sir, and without much trouble." Taking up a rope, I told him to try. He gave one look at me, and then pulled me off my feet; and although I sacrificed my spurs by digging them into the ground, he took me across the parade ground without any apparent effort. My judgment was decidedly faulty; although he was not more than a stone heavier than I was, his arms and back were abnormally powerful. I was much interested in training the team, which beat in succession every battalion at Aldershot, the Garrison Artillery at Portsmouth, every regiment of the Guards, a Brigade team of the Guards, a team from H.M.S. *Excellent* at Portsmouth, and a team of the Royal Marines. We sent it about to different garrisons, and it was never beaten until it met the 96th Regiment, which had an equally well trained team, each man being about half a stone heavier in weight, the effect of which was decisive.

When we were marching up from King William's Town to Natal, our men vanquished the Frontier Light Horse, composed of fine men, as they did when at Utrecht, and again at Kambula Hill, but they could not make the Dutchmen take their pipes out of their mouths. I said to Piet Uys, "I do not think your pipe will be alight in a quarter of an hour." He laughed, and at the end of the quarter of an hour the laugh was against me, for the Dutchmen, averaging 14 or 15 stone, with enormous knotted arms, and hands like iron, waited until the 90th were exhausted, and then without an effort pulled them over.

In each camp we occupied I made a lawn-tennis ground, playing it, and polo on alternate afternoons, when I was not out on reconnoitring expeditions.

CHAPTER XXIX

1879—IN ZULULAND

A bibulous officer—The disaster on the Intombe River—Uhamu joins me—We go to his district and bring in his 300 wives and families, 1100 in all—Piet Uys and his sons—Redvers Buller's kindness of heart—Zulu woman's rapid parturition—Officers sent to Free State to purchase Transport—The Mounted Troops bivouac under the Inhlobane—Piet Uys charges me to protect his children if orphaned.

AT some athletic sports held in February, I was strolling amongst the competitors when I received a vigorous slap on the back, and, turning round, was greeted effusively by an Officer with the exclamation: "How are you, old boy?" He was not able to stand steady, and I sent him away under arrest, in charge of Captain Ronald Campbell. Next day, when he was brought before me, I asked: "What have you got to say?" Now, I have had to deal with many similar offenders, but never before had such an honest answer; most men attribute their inebriety to an incongruous mixture with salad, or to the effects of a very small amount of alcohol on an empty stomach under a hot sun, but my officer replied: "Drunk, sir, drunk; nothing but drunk." "This is very serious, and I should like some hours to think over your case." "Quite simple, sir; you must either let me off, or try me by Court Martial." When I saw him again I said: "It is not the question of our safety only, but also of our honour as soldiers; if you are in charge of the Piquets when this happens again, you might cause a great disaster." "In the language of the soldiers, sir," he replied, "if you give me a chance I shall never be drunk again while under your command." He kept his promise, showed great courage in action some weeks later (for which, indeed, he had been noted when tiger shooting on foot in India), and his reformation

was complete. A year later, when in Cape Town, I came across him one day when I had arranged a dinner to many of my former comrades, the Club being placed at my disposal for the purpose. Although the dinner was convivial, and I invited my bibulous comrade, I should have been doubtful of his reformation if he had abstained altogether, but he took an ordinary amount of wine, and left about midnight perfectly sober.

Before he joined me in 1878 he was drinking heavily, while attached to another regiment at Maritzburg. One day the Mess Sergeant said to the officer managing the Mess: "Unless I get some relief, sir, I must go back to duty." "Why, what is wrong?" "So-and-so goes to sleep every night on the sofa in the ante-room, and as he never wakes up till between one and two o'clock, I cannot close the Mess." "Sergeant, don't mind him,—lock it up, and go to bed," the officer replied; and so he did. Next morning about 2 a.m. the honorary member awoke, and, rolling off the sofa, collided with the coal scuttle, and then fell over a high fender guard. This alarmed him considerably, and crawling away he clutched the legs of a centre table, which he overturned. The crash aroused the Sergeant, who hurried in undressed, grasping a lighted candle, when the officer exclaimed in a piteous tone: "Where am I—in Hell?" The Sergeant, standing erect in his night-shirt, said: "No, sir, Officers' mess." The Officer sat up, and at once asserted his authority, saying decidedly: "Then, bring me a brandy and soda."

During the night of the 12th-13th March I was awakened by a messenger with the news of the disaster to a company of the 80th Regiment, which was marching from Derby to Luneberg. Four companies crossing the Intombe River, 5 miles from Luneberg, had camped at the station when the water rose, and the 5th Company was unable to cross. A raft was employed, and one-third of the company had reached the west side of the stream of the river at nightfall. Half an hour before daylight next day an attack was made by Umbeline, assisted by Manyoba's[1] tribe. Nearly every one on the east bank of the river was assegaied, many in their tents, and the Zulus, taking to the water like otter hounds, crossed and endeavoured

[1] The nervous Chief who feared I was going to arrest him in September.

to overwhelm the 34 men on the Western bank. Some 10 of these, however, were not only skilfully but courageously handled by Sergeant Booth, who successfully brought the party back. In all 40 of our men were killed.

I went over at daylight to the scene—40 miles distant—to inquire into the disaster, and to ensure our system for security being adopted for the future, returning in the afternoon to camp, as I had arranged a long ride for next day.

Uhamu, a brother of Cetewayo's, came into our camp[1] in the Cape cart which I sent for him, he being so enormously bulky that it was difficult to find a horse to carry him. He had made many appointments, but in the procrastinating Zulu fashion had failed for various reasons to keep them, until Colonel Buller had ceased to believe in his being willing to come over to us. Finally he went to my Assistant Political Agent, Norman Macleod, in Swaziland. He was no sooner in our camp than he asked me if I would be good enough to go after his wives. "How many are there, Uhamu?" "I don't know but about 300," he replied vaguely. "But you have got two now with you," I urged. "These are only slaves,—I should like to have the others." "I am not willing to take the responsibility of escorting all your wives unless you will come with me." "Oh, in such a case, Great Commander, I would sooner do without them."

Uhamu's head Place was in a rugged country, 45 miles from our camp, between the Black Umvolosi and Mkusi Rivers, and Ulundi being within 40 miles of the kraal, there was the possibility of our return being cut off if either of Uhamu's men let it be known, by Cetewayo's adherents, they were collecting the women in anticipation of our arrival.

Looking, however, to the Political effect of getting out the tribe, I decided to go down, and on the 14th March started with 360 mounted men under Buller, and 200 of Uhamu's men, many of whom had fought against No. 3 Column at Isandwhlana. Some of my officers objected to my leaving Buller and the White men and accompaning Uhamu's people, by a short cut

[1] Sir Bartle Frere eulogised my agent, Captain Macleod, and me for our "temper, judgment, and patience" in getting Uhamu over from his brother; and a Zulu agent told Bishop Colenso, and Sir Bartle later, that Cetewayo's altered tone was due to the defection of Uhamu.

over the Zunguin Mountain, which would save three hours' travelling. I argued that there was absolutely no danger while their Chief was located in my camp, especially as the men looked forward to bringing their wives and children back with them.

I took with me Captain Woodgate,[1] Mr. Llewellyn Lloyd,[2] my interpreter, Lieutenants Bigge,[3] Bright,[2] and Lysons.[4] We joined Colonel Buller under the Inhlobane, down the slopes of which some aggressive Zulus came, and fired at us at long ranges. I allowed two or three men to return the fire, and then had two shots myself, and the bullets falling amongst the Makulusi—for they occupied the mountain, silenced their fire.

About 2 p.m. we saw a few cattle to the south of us, and Piet Uys despatched his two boys, aged fifteen and thirteen, with half a dozen men to drive them to us. Master Dirks Uys shot a Zulu. When the father heard the firing he tried to look unconcerned, and was too proud to ask me (for his eyes were not as good as mine) if I could see what the lad was doing. Lysons told me later that he kept on repeating, "Are they coming back yet?" The men brought back about 100 head of cattle, and I said to my friend Piet, "I am glad the lad has come back. I saw that you were nervous." "Yes," he said, "I am always nervous if I am not there myself," a feeling which I understood. Nevertheless he risked them in every skirmish, though the warmth of his affection for his youngest born—Piet was a widower—was evident. In an argument he said something which I thought unworthy of the bigness of his character, and I remarked, "Why, you risk Dirks for us, you should not talk of farms and property"; and he replied, his eyes filling, "You are quite right, I would not give Dirks for all Zululand!" An hour or two later Piet called out that he saw Zulus, and galloped off with his two boys, but on this occasion nothing happened, for the Zulus he had sighted were some of Uhamu's men, who, taking advantage of our presence, were coming to join us.

[1] General Woodgate, mortally wounded at Spion Kop.
[2] Both killed in action a fortnight later. [3] Now Colonel Sir Arthur Bigge.
[4] Lately Colonel Commanding a battalion of the Bedfordshire Regiment; now on Staff in India.

We marched steadily till sunset, when we off-saddled for an hour, to let the horses graze, and, moving off again at dusk, at 9.30 p.m. reached the spot I had arranged with Uhamu, having taken three hours to pass over the last seven miles. We descended a mountain by a goat path, and all the Europeans dismounted; but I, being tired from having been touched by the sun in the forenoon, threw the reins on my pony's neck and let him choose, or rather feel, the path,—it was too dark to see, and we got down without accident.

At sunset Uhamu's 200 men who accompanied me had asked me to stop, declaring they were tired. This I refused, and when we got down they had nearly cooked their food, having passed down by a still steeper but shorter path. Before I went to sleep I had some of the women, for whom I came, brought out of a cave three miles off, as I foresaw there would be delay next morning, and every hour added to the chance of our being caught by some of Cetewayo's regiments. During the night I sent 6 miles away to some caves where I heard there were more women, being unable to sleep soundly, although greatly fatigued, for one troop of the Frontier Light Horse, linked [1] in line, nearly walked over me, after they had eaten all the grass within reach. Buller came and pulled them away; indeed, every time I awoke in the night I saw him walking up and down, for he felt we were in a precarious position.

At daylight we shook ourselves, and began to start—a long stream of humanity. The Refugees numbered between 900 and 1000, men, women, and children. Many of the latter, although only five years old, walked from 6.30 a.m. till 9.30 p.m., when they had covered 30 miles. I sent Captain Barton on in front, while Colonel Buller and I remained behind. At 8.30 we were assured by Messrs. Calverley and Rorke—two traders who had often been in the district—that we had got the whole of the women and children. My engagement was that I would remain till daylight,—that is, six o'clock. At 8.30 Colonel Buller marched, a small Rear guard, remaining with me till 10.30, as even then stragglers were coming in, the last few being shot at, and two assegaied in our sight but too far off for us to save them. My friend Buller had stoutly

[1] Horses are linked by a headrope being passed through the head collar, and then through that of the next horse.

declared that he would have nothing to do with the verminous children, nevertheless during the march I more than once saw him with six little black bodies in front of and behind his saddle, children under five years of age.

As we passed under the Inhlobane, the Makulusi tribe, which had been reinforced by one of Cetewayo's regiments from Ulundi, fired a few shots at us without any effect, and we bivouaced at nightfall on a small effluent of the White Umvolosi, where Vryheid now stands.

Next morning I started the procession at daylight, remaining myself on the top of the Zungu in range to see the Rear guard into camp. I had sent in for all mule waggons available, to save the children a farther walk of 10 miles, and was waiting at the top of the pass, up which we had climbed on the 22nd January, for a dozen women who were loitering half up the mountain. It was past noon when I desired Piet Uys to descend and hurry them up, holding his horse for him, for it was too steep to ride down. When he returned he said, in his curious mixture of Dutch, German, and English, "Kurnall, die vrow sie sagt now too sick, presently have baby, then come quick." "Piet," I exclaimed, "oughtn't we to send some of these women back to see after her?" "Not necessary, Kurnall, she come." Calling Mr. Llewellyn Lloyd, my interpreter, I apprised him of the situation, and said, "You are not to go into camp until that woman gets there." Finally, waiting for the waggons longer than I expected, I did not reach camp till 5 p.m., and, having had nothing to eat or drink since our morning cocoa at daylight, I was annoyed to see Lloyd sitting in his tent with a cup of tea, and observed in a somewhat irritable tone, "I thought I told you not to come into camp until the woman who was about to bring a baby into the world had arrived. "Yes, quite so," he replied, "but she has been in camp a long time. Half an hour after you told me, she passed me like one of Waukenphast's pictures, doing five miles an hour easily, and I, suspecting that she had left her baby in the rocks, made her angry by insisting on seeing it, but she had it right enough under her arm."

Throughout the weeks of waiting for reinforcements I had frequent letters of encouragement from the High Commissioner and Lord Chelmsford; the latter writing to me frankly, said I

had caused irritation amongst the local Civil authorities by the insistent tone of my communications. I have no doubt that this was accurate, but on the other hand many were supine, some actually obstructive. I was unable to induce the Field Cornet of Wesselstroom to take any effectual steps to send back 400 men who had deserted, out of the 600 enlisted when we crossed the border.

The Transvaal Boers rejoiced in our misfortune, and openly stated that they intended to rise; some of the Natal authorities objected to my sending any Refugees into the Colony, advancing the most absurd reasons. The Political Agent, sent from Pretoria to Utrecht to assist me, instead of doing so wrote at length that he was advised that the action of the Administrator of the Transvaal, in putting the Commando law in force for the Kafirs, was illegal. The Civil authorities on the Natal and Transvaal border clamoured for protection, and urged me, but in vain, to fall back to ensure the protection of certain villages.

The Utrecht Landdrost begged me to encamp close to that village, while the Landdrost of Wesselstroom, the chief village of the Wakkerstroom district, spent much time in endeavouring to persuade me to encamp in front of his village. When I intimated that I was not interested in Utrecht, as I had ample supplies at Balte Spruit, they expressed anxiety for the safety of that depot, and importuned Lord Chelmsford on the subject, who referred the correspondence to me, and to whom on the 3rd March I wrote in reply: "I have often considered your proposition about the Zulus masking this position, and going on to attack Balte Spruit and Utrecht. I do not believe they are equal to such a manœuvre, and are incapable of remaining in presence of a Force without attacking it or running away. If all our mounted men were absent I should feel anxious, but so long as they are here I could always make the Zulus attack us by sending the mounted men to follow them if they marched to Balte Spruit. I doubt Cetewayo turning out more than 30,000 men; if he does, he would do better to send 20,000 here and 10,000 against you. Moreover, the moral effect of our being in Zululand is considerable, both on the Swazis and the Boers." I discussed fully in this letter a scheme I had long considered about attacking the Inhlobane, but when Colonel

Buller burnt the Makulusi Kraals, bringing away 500 of their cattle, the necessity was less apparent, and I did not recur to the plan until asked to take pressure off the Force relieving Ekowe.

The Civil authorities were not, however, the only demoralised people. The General, in deference to the apprehensions of the inhabitants, sent a garrison to hold a village 30 miles behind our camp, and the Commanding officer marched round by Newcastle, adding 12 miles to his journey to avoid crossing a bit of Zululand 10 miles on the safe side of Kambula, and on arrival pitched his men's tents inside the cattle laager, which was several feet deep in manure; he became sick in a few days and went away. The next senior officer, on hearing of the disaster to the Company of the 80th, on the Intombe 45 miles distant, recalled a Company which was 10 miles behind our camp, at Kambula, for fear of its being surprised, although there were still four companies 80th Regiment at Luneberg, and another company from our camp, coal digging, all between him and the enemy. Indeed, the overweening confidence felt by many before the war had now changed into unreasoning apprehension.

The one great heroic figure throughout the time when men's minds were depressed was undoubtedly the High Commissioner, Sir Bartle Frere. He spent many days and nights in supporting all my demands, and in coercing unwilling and timorous Civil subordinates. With great address and moral courage he prevented an outbreak of the Boers, projected after the destruction of No. 3 Column.

On the 12th March I took the opportunity, when acknowledging the thanks by the High Commissioner and the General, to point out how much I owed to the Staff officers, Mr. Llewellyn Lloyd, my interpreter and Assistant Political Agent, Captain Ronald Campbell of the Coldstream Guards, Captain Vaughan, R.A., Director of Transport, and Mr. Hughes, Assistant Commissary-General, who worked literally day and night to carry out my wishes.

The difficulties of transport for the increased force, which was coming out to reinforce Lord Chelmsford's command, being always before me, I wrote urging that we should purchase sufficient at once, as hiring was not only extravagant

but impracticable. The Chief replied on the 14th March that he had handed my offer to provide waggons to the Commissary-General, and was surprised that he did not jump at the offer, but added, "I do not like to interfere with his arrangements; please do as you like best yourself. I congratulate you on the surrender of Uhamu, the entire credit of which belongs to you. You can do anything you like with your column; if you like to attack the Inhlobane, pray do so."

I had previously asked permission to send officers to the Free State to purchase mule transport, foreseeing that the final advance on Ulundi might be delayed until the grass on the veldt would no longer suffice for oxen, and thus render the movement impossible without mule transport. After writing in vain repeated reminders for five weeks, I decided to act on the qualified sanction of my Chief in his letter of the 14th, "Please do as you like best yourself"; and on the 23rd sent two officers to the Free State, giving the senior, Captain Bradshaw, 13th Light Infantry, a cheque for £56,000, drawn on the Standard Bank of South Africa. They did very well indeed, enabling me to supply the 2nd Division, without which, as Lord Chelmsford wrote later, the advance would have been impossible.

The only comment made by the War Office on my action was to the effect that, as the money could not be all expended at once, I ought to have drawn two cheques, each for £28,000 at different dates, as I should thus have saved the amount of interest unnecessarily paid to the Bank. In my reply, while admitting my mistake, I remarked I had already spent for the Government over £50,000 without the assistance of a Paymaster, and it was therefore reasonable to debit the salary of such an officer against the amount of interest I had unnecessarily incurred.

The day Captain Bradshaw left was one of some anxiety. I had arranged a raid, by all the mounted men, in a North-Easterly direction to the Southward of Luneberg, to destroy the crops of one of our most troublesome foes. A convoy of 40 waggons was going in the opposite direction, South-South West to Balte Spruit, escorted by Infantry, and there was a working party, with an Infantry escort, employed in removing Potter's Store, which I had purchased and was moving from

the Pemvane River to Balte Spruit. When we stood to our arms an hour before daylight the fog was so thick that we could not see 40 yards, and it did not clear off till the forenoon. I decided, however, to let the movement proceed as ordered, preferring the risk of surprise while I was present, to any which might occur in my absence.

Next morning, when I saw the convoys safe back in camp, I started and, overtaking Colonel Buller's 300 men, and 500 of Wood's Irregulars, reached Luneberg at sunset on the 24th. Next day we spread out over the basin of the Intombe River, cultivated by Umbiline's tribe, who were Zulus, although he was a renegade Swazi. We destroyed all the crops we could, and after two long days' work returned, on the evening of the 26th, to Kambula Hill.

In a letter dated the 19th, Lord Chelmsford called my attention to a paragraph in a Maritzburg newspaper, from a Correspondent with No. 4 Column, alleging that I was fretting at the inaction imposed on me by the General, and wrote, "You can undertake any operations you like, and I shall hear of it with pleasure. I hear all Cetewayo's army will be concentrated about Ekowe in a few days, so we shall have a hottish encounter." I replied on the 27th, "I do not often see the letters of the Correspondent, and hold no communication with him. If I did I should certainly tell him I am perfectly unfettered, your only action being to support me in every way. Buller has started, and at 3 p.m. I follow, to try to get up the Inhlobane at daylight to-morrow. I am not very sanguine of success. We do not know how steep the Eastern end may be, but I think we ought to make a stir here, to divert attention from you, although, as you see by our last reports, it is asserted that you have only Coast tribes against you, and that all Cetewayo's people are coming here."

In the forenoon of the 27th March, the two columns which were to attack the Inhlobane at daylight next morning marched; I followed in the evening, intending to lie down 5 miles under the Western edge of the Inhlobane. The more important part of the operation was intrusted to Colonel Buller, under whose orders I placed the two battalions of Wood's regiment. The 1st battalion, under Major Leet, bivouacing near the White Umvolosi, where Vryheid now stands, was

intended to ascend the Western end of the mountain; both columns were to get as high up as they could before daylight on the 28th. In the orders I stated that, as Cetewayo was said to be advancing with his whole army, scouts were to be sent to the South and South-West, to watch the avenues of approach from Ulundi.

I took with me Mr. Lloyd, Assistant Political Agent and Interpreter, Captain the Honourable Ronald Campbell, Coldstream Guards, and Lieutenant Lysons, 90th Light Infantry, Orderly officer, my personal escort, eight mounted men of the battalion, and seven mounted Zulus under Umtonga, a half-brother of Cetewayo's, whom the father, Umpande, had originally designated to succeed him. Before I went to sleep I had a long talk with Piet Uys, who was to accompany Colonel Buller, and had stayed behind to see me, while the Colonel had bivouaced 5 miles farther to the east. Mr. Potter, a Captain in the 1st Battalion, Wood's Irregulars, also came to me. Both men knew the Inhlobane, and Potter had often been up on it. I asked whether, if we should have the bad luck after taking the mountain to see Cetewayo's army advancing, we could get down on the North side, and Mr. Potter assured me that we could,—by leading our horses. Piet Uys was confident that Colonel Buller would get up, without serious loss, and we agreed that, except in the probable contingency of the Zulu main army coming in sight, our operation ought to be a success; then Piet turning to me, said, "Kurnall, if you are killed I will take care of your children, and if I am killed you do the same for mine." We had heard, indeed, for several days that Kambula was to be attacked, but were informed that the Zulu Army could not leave till the 27th, as there had been a delay in "doctoring" one of the largest regiments. This was inaccurate. It had started on the 25th March.

CHAPTER XXX

1879—THE INHLOBANE, 28TH MARCH

The ride to Death—Buller surmounts the mountain—Fate of two heroic Coldstream Officers — Campbell and Barton — Major Leet, V.C.— Chicheeli's description of Barton's death—Buller's heroism—Ronald Campbell as tender hearted as he was brave.

AT 3 a.m. on the 28th I rode Eastward, with the Staff officers and escort. Captain Campbell and I were silent, but the two younger men chattered till I wondered whether their voices could reach the Zulus on the Inhlobane. When Ronald Campbell spoke on Lloyd's challenge for his thoughts, he replied, "I am hoping my wife is well and happy." Lloyd and Lysons, jubilant at the prospect of a fight, remarking on my silence, asked, "Are you doubtful, sir, of our getting up to the top of the mountain?" "Oh no, we shall get up." "Then, of what are you thinking?" "Well, which of you will be writing to my wife to-night, or about which of you young men I shall be writing to parents or wife?"

Colonel Buller, to avoid risk of being surprised, had shifted bivouac twice during the night, but at daylight we struck his track and followed it. We met a Squadron of his Force coming Westwards, the Commandant having lost his way the previous night, and I directed him to move to the sound of the firing, which was now audible on the North-East face of the mountain, where we could just discern the rear of Colonel Buller's column mounting the summit. I followed the Squadron, but when it came under fire, as it did not advance rapidly, I passed to the front, the track at first being easy to follow, from worn grass and dead horses of Colonel Buller's command lying on it. Hard rock now replaced the beaten

down grass, and as we came under fire I unconsciously, by leading directly towards the rocks whence the bullets came, missed the easier gradient, up which Buller's men had ridden, losing only one officer. The ground was now steep and very rugged, so we dismounted and put the horses of my White and Black escort in a cattle kraal, the walls of which were 2½ feet high. Campbell invited me to leave my horse. I said, "No; I am a bad walker," and pulled it after me, Mr. Lloyd being close on my left hand. Half a dozen of the foremost of the Irregulars had dismounted sooner, and followed me until Lloyd and I were within 100 feet of the crest of the mountain, and we came under well-directed fire in our front, and from both flanks, the enemy being concealed behind huge boulders of rock.

The men of the Squadron 200 yards behind us now opened fire, and Mr. Lloyd said, "I am glad of that, for it will make the Zulus shoot badly." He had scarcely spoken these words when a Zulu rose up from behind a rock 50 yards above us, and, touching Lloyd with my elbow, I observed, "He won't hit us in the face," for he laid his gun directly at my waistbelt. He fired, and Lloyd fell back, exclaiming, "I am hit!" "Badly?" "Yes, very badly; my back's broken!" I tried to lift him on my shoulders, but he was taller than I, and the ground being steep I stumbled, when Captain Campbell climbing up said, "Let me lift him," and carried him on his shoulder 50 yards down to where the horses were standing in the cattle kraal, under the walls of which the escort were sheltering. I climbed a few yards higher, when a Zulu fired at me from underneath a rock, 20 yards distant. The charge struck my horse immediately in front of the girth, killing it instantaneously, and as it fell, striking my shoulder with its head, knocked me down. I heard an exclamation from my comrades, and scrambling up called, "No, I am not hit!" and as they began climbing the hill, added, "Please stop where you are. I am coming down, for it's too steep to get on any farther, in this place." When I got down to the kraal, I saw Mr. Lloyd was dying. He could no longer speak; obtaining some brandy from Lysons, I tried to pour a little down his throat, but his teeth were already set.

I told Captain Campbell to order the Irregular horsemen,

who were taking cover under rocks below us, to clear the caves from whence the firing had come which killed my horse. He found much difficulty in inducing the men to advance, as they alleged the position was unassailable; and eventually, leading four of my personal escort, with Lieutenant Lysons, he climbed up, Bugler Walkinshaw going with him. I called Walkinshaw back before he was out of sight, for I wanted help for Mr. Lloyd; and thus he, one of the bravest men in the Army, missed the chance of gaining the Victoria Cross. In a few moments one of the men told me that the cave was cleared, but that Ronald Campbell was dead. He had led the small party of three or four men, passing up a narrow passage only 2 feet wide between rocks 12 feet high for several yards, and was looking down into the cave, when a Zulu fired, almost touching him, and he fell dead. Lieutenant Lysons and Private Fowler,[1] 90th Light Infantry, undauntedly passing over the body, fired into the cave, and the few Zulus in it disappeared through another opening.

By the time the men brought Ronald Campbell's body down, Mr. Lloyd was dead. Telling Walkinshaw to put his ear down to his heart, he made sure, and then I tried to put the bodies up on my baggage animal. The fire from the rocks on all sides was fairly accurate, killing many out of the 21 ponies we had with us. As bullets were striking all round me on the stones, my pony moved every time I got Campbell's body on my shoulder. Walkinshaw, who was entirely unconcerned at the bullets, said, "If you will hold it, sir, I will put the bodies up"; and this he did.

It then occurred to me that in the wallets of the saddle under my horse, which was lying with all four feet in the air, was Campbell's wife's Prayer book, a small one I had borrowed before starting from Kambula, as my own was a large Church Service, and I said to Walkinshaw, "Climb up the hill, and get the prayer book in my wallets; while I do not want you to get shot for the saddle, you are to take all risks for the sake of the prayer book." He climbed up in a leisurely fashion, and, pulling the saddle from underneath the horse, brought it safely down on his head. We then moved down the mountain 300 yards, to find a spot on soil clear of rocks.

[1] They both received the Victoria Cross.

INHLOBANE, 28TH MARCH, 1879

COLONEL EVELYN WOOD TO LORD CHELMSFORD. "MR. LLOYD FELL MORTALLY WOUNDED AT MY SIDE- CAPTAIN CAMPBELL LEADING IN THE MOST GALLANT AND DETERMINED MANNER WAS SHOT DEAD. WE BROUGHT THEIR BODIES HALF-WAY DOWN THE HILL, WHERE WE BURIED THEM, STILL UNDER FIRE"

The operation of digging a grave was laborious, as our only implements were the assegais of the native escort, and when it had been completed to about 4 feet in depth, the men got flurried by the approach of some 300 Zulus from the Ityenteka Nek, and, lifting the bodies, placed them in the grave. It was not long enough, and although I realised the possibility of our having trouble with the approaching Zulus, yet as they were still 600 yards off and were most of them bad shots at that range, I had the bodies lifted out, and the grave made a proper length to receive them without the lower limbs being doubled up. When I was satisfied, I read an abridged form of the Burial Service from Mrs. Campbell's prayer book. We were now assisted by the fire of some of Colonel Buller's men, who, seeing our difficulty, opened on the advancing Zulus, and, being above them, checked their approach. The officer commanding the Irregulars asked permission to move down the hill to regain Colonel Buller's track, and by it he finally reached the summit without further casualties. He had lost only 6 men dead, and 7 wounded, up to this hour.

As all firing on top of the mountain had now ceased, I decided to move back, and see how the other column had fared. Passing one of the Irregulars who had been shot in the thigh, I put him up on one of the dead men's horses, and as there was no apparent hurry, Umtonga's men drove with us a flock of sheep and goats. We stopped occasionally to give the wounded man stimulants, being unconscious that the main Zulu Army was moving on our left, across, and towards our path. When we were under the centre of the mountain, Umtonga, whom I had sent out to a ridge on our danger flank, gesticulated excitedly, explaining by signs that there was a large army near us. Cantering up, I had a good view of the Force, which was marching in 5 columns, with the flanks advanced, and a dense Centre—the normal Zulu attack formation.

I sent Lieutenant Lysons to the officer commanding the western party with the following order:—

"Below the Inhlobane. 10.30 a.m. 28/3/79.

"There is a large army coming this way from the South. Get into position on the Zunguin Nek. E. W."

The plateau which Colonel Buller's force had cleared was 150 feet higher than the Lower Plateau on which the western column stood, but both parties saw the Zulu Army a considerable time before I did, as I was 1000 feet below them. Buller had seen it at 9 a.m., and the western force had seen it rather earlier, Buller being engaged in covering a party of 25 of the Frontier Light Horse under Captain Barton, Coldstream Guards, who were descending the eastern slope to bury one or two men killed in the assault. Sending word to Captain Barton to retire, Buller fell back to the western end of the mountain, and forming some selected men into a rear guard, he took them down the almost precipitous edge of the Upper Plateau. The path was down the apex of a salient angle, with long sides, and the head of the descent was well suited for defence. Buller's men had previously collected a great number of cattle, which had been driven down towards the Zunguin Nek at 7 a.m. Colonel Buller and all his party would have got safely away had not the Makulusi, and the men of the Regular regiment with it, taking courage at the advance of the Zulu Army, emerged from their caves and harassed the retreat, during which some valuable lives were lost. Colonel Buller came down, practically the last man, and was at the foot of the descent from the Upper Plateau, when, seeing men nearly surrounded by Zulus, he went back on two occasions, and brought out in succession two on his horse. Piet Uys came down with him, until he was one of his sons having difficulty with his horse, and, going back, was assegaied by a Zulu crouching behind him.[1]

[1] The death of Piet Uys was a great loss to us, and Lord Chelmsford supported the earnest representations I made in his favour, as did also Sir Bartle Frere, who knew a great deal about him. He was intensely Patriotic, and had done not only good service to No. 4 column, but to South Africa, for although he had opposed the Annexation, the justice of which he denied as regards his countrymen, he admitted its necessity in the interests of the country at large, and he lent all his great influence, in opposition to many of his oldest and dearest friends, in pressing on the attention of his countrymen their duty in combatting our savage foes. He had armed, equipped, mounted, and provisioned his numerous family at his own expense, bringing all his sons into the field. He had persistently refused to accept pay for himself, or for any of his relatives, who, after his death, declined to accept the arrears of pay which I offered. He constantly acted as Arbitrator in compensation cases for damage done in the operations to the property of Dutchmen, and no decision was ever questioned by the sufferers, or by myself, who had to decide on

About 80 of the First Battalion of Wood's Irregulars were overtaken and killed, and with them, to my great regret, Captain Potter, and Lieutenant Williams[1] of the 58th regiment.

The main Zulu Army being exhausted by their march, halted near where Vryheid now stands, but some of their mounted men came on, and a few of the more active and younger footmen. Before leaving camp I had given orders for a barricade of planks, 5 feet high, to be erected, and securely bolted into the ground with supporting struts, to run between the redoubt and the south end of the cattle laager, to stop a rush from the ravine on to the fort. To those who objected that the Zulus would charge and knock it down by the weight of their bodies, I replied it would cause a delay of several minutes, during which 300 or 400 rifles, at 250 yards range, ought to make an additional barricade of human bodies, and I now sent an order to the Senior officer in camp, to chain up the waggons, and to continue the strengthening of the barricade. I wrote I had seen between 20,000 and 25,000 Zulus, and remained on the Zunguin Mountain till 7 p.m., hoping to cover the retreat of any more of our men who might come up, being particularly anxious about Captain Barton,[2] of whom we had

the claim. When one of his own farms was accidentally damaged, he would not allow it to be reported. I asked for 36,000 acres of Government land to be set apart for his nine children, and was supported in my request by the High Commissioner, whose last official letter before leaving Natal some months later was to urge on the Colonial Office the importance of giving effect to my recommendation; but I doubt if it would ever have been carried into effect had I not been afforded the opportunity of stating the case personally to Her Gracious Majesty the Queen, who ensured the provision being made.

[1] When the latter joined me, not very long before, I had a very favourable report of him from the Assistant Military Secretary, Colonel North Crealock, and my experience during the few days in which he worked under my command fully justified it.

[2] I tell now the manner of Robert Barton's noble end, although it was fourteen months later that I obtained the details. He had shown not only distinguished courage, but in actions great humanity, and in the previous January nearly lost his life in trying to take a Zulu prisoner, the man firing his gun so close to Barton as to burn the skin off his face.

When, on receipt of Colonel Buller's warning, he descended the mountain, he trotted on westward, followed by the men of the Irregular Squadron who had been with me at the eastern end, and who, before I returned, had gained the summit without further loss. As they reached the western base of the mountain, some of the Ngobamakosi regiment headed them, and they tried to cut their way through, but, after losing some

had no news since he descended the eastern end of the mountain.

I never knew until that day the depth of regard which Buller felt for me. I was sitting on the summit of the Zunguin range when he climbed up it, and, seeing me suddenly, uttered so fervent a "Thank God!" that I asked for what he was thankful, and he explained that he thought I had been cut off at the eastern end of the mountain. It rained heavily on the evening of the 28th. All the mounted men had been on the move day and night since the 23rd, when we went to Luneberg; but at 9 p.m., when a straggler came in to say that there were some Europeans coming back by Potter's Store, Redvers Buller immediately saddled up, and, taking out led horses, brought in 7 men, who were, as we believed, the sole survivors of the parties at the east end of the mountain.

So far as I know, the only officer who got down the western end of the Inhlobane on horseback was Major Leet, who commanded the 1st battalion Wood's Irregulars. Six

men, retraced their steps eastwards, and, though many fell, Barton got safely down over the Ityenteka Nek.

When I was with Her Imperial Majesty the Empress Eugénie, in May 1880, on the Ityatosi River, I asked Sirayo's son, Melokazulo,[1] who was a mounted officer of the Ngobomakosi tribe, if he could tell me whether any of his men had killed my friend, whose body had never been found. He said, "No; for I followed you, although you were not aware of it, and, when failing to overtake you, I turned back, I was too late to overtake those who were going eastward, and the pursuit was taken up by mounted men of the Umcityu regiment. I know a man named Chicheeli, who was a mounted officer of the Umcityu, and I believe saw what took place." I said, "Send for him," to which he replied, "He won't come unless you send for him. He will believe Lakuni."[2] Chicheeli came, and talked quite frankly, giving me a still higher opinion of the powers of observation of the savage than I already had. After describing the coat and other clothes that Barton wore, he said, "The White man was slightly pitted by smallpox." Now I had lived at Aldershot for two years in daily intercourse with Robert Barton, and at once said, "Then it is not the man I mean." Chicheeli, however, declined to be shaken from his statement, and repeated that the marks on his face were slight, but that there was no doubt that he had had smallpox. Opening my portmanteau, I took out a cabinet-sized photograph and a magnifier, and, examining the face closely, I then perceived that what I had for two years taken to be roughness of skin was really the marks of smallpox, which Chicheeli had noticed as he stood over the dead body.

Chicheeli told me that on the Ityenteka Nek he followed several White men and

[1] Reported as having been killed in Bambaata's rebellion, 1906.

[2] This was my name among the Zulus. The word describes the hard wood of which Zulus make their knobkerries, or bludgeons.

weeks earlier, at the Athletic Sports, we had a Tug-of-war between the officers of the 13th and 90th Light Infantry, captained by Leet and myself, and as the 90th pulled over the 13th Leet wrenched his knee out of joint, and I had told him to remain in camp on the 27th. This, however, he did not do, and as he could only hobble, he tried, and successfully, to ride down the mountain. I believe he got down before the counter attack; but while on the Lower Plateau, and being followed up closely by the enemy, he showed distinguished courage in going back to help a dismounted officer, for which he received the Victoria Cross.

On the night of the 28th March, as I sat at dinner, I could not keep my mind off Ronald Campbell, who had sat opposite me for three months, and had anticipated every want with the utmost devotion, and I cannot write now, even after the lapse of a quarter of a century, without pain of the loss the army sustained when my friend fell. As I visited the outposts at least twice every night from the date of Isandwhana till after Ulandi, 4th July, my clothes were nearly always damp from walking through the long grass, which, when not wet from the

killed them, one man, as he approached, turning his carbine and shooting himself. When he, with several others, got down on the plain, 7 miles from the mountain, he overtook Captain Barton, who had taken Lieutenant Poole up on his horse. He fired at them, and when the horse, being exhausted, could no longer struggle under the double weight, the riders dismounted and separated. Chicheeli first shot Lieutenant Poole, and was going up towards Barton, when the latter pulled the trigger of his revolver, which did not go off. Chicheeli then put down his gun and assegai, and made signs to Barton to surrender. I asked, "Did you really want to spare him?" "Yes," he replied; "Cetewayo had ordered us to bring one or two Indunas down to Ulundi, and I had already killed seven men." Barton lifted his hat, and the men were close together when a Zulu fired at him, and he fell mortally wounded; and then, said Chicheeli, "I could not let anyone else kill him, so I ran up and assegaied him." I said, "Do you think you can find the body?" "Yes, certainly," he said; "but you must lend me a horse, for it is a day and a half."[1] I sent Trooper Brown, V.C., with him next day, and, with the marvellous instinct of a savage, he rode to within 300 yards of the spot where fourteen months previously he had killed my friend, and then said, "Now we can off-saddle, for we are close to the spot," and, casting round like a harrier, came in less than five minutes upon Barton's body, which had apparently never been disturbed by any beast or bird of prey. The clothes and boots were rotten and ant-eaten, and tumbled to pieces on being touched. Brown cut off some buttons from the breeches, and took a Squadron Pay book from the pocket filled with Barton's writing, and then buried the remains, placing over them a small wooden cross painted black, on which is cut "Robert Barton, killed in action, 28th March 1879," and then he and Chicheeli buried the body of Lieutenant Poole.

[1] Equal to 60 miles.

heavy rain which fell constantly through the months of February and March, was soaked with dew, and I had forbidden either of the Staff accompanying me, because, as we slept in our boots and clothes, anyone who walked round the sentries got saturated up to the waistbelt. I had, however, once or twice suspected that I was being followed, and one night, turning suddenly in the darkness, I knocked against a man, and then recognised Campbell's voice, as he answered my challenge. I said sharply, "Why are you disobeying orders? What are you doing here?" "I have always the fear, sir," he replied, "that one night you won't hear the challenge of one of the sentries, and you will be shot." On two occasions on which I was in bed with fever for three days, he nursed me as tenderly as could a woman, and I never saw anyone play a more heroic part than he did on the morning of the 28th March 1879.

CHAPTER XXXI

1879—KAMBULA, 29TH MARCH

Mist delays the advance of 23,000 Zulus—Piet Uys having fallen, Burghers leave us—The position under the Ngaba-ka-Hawane—Bigge—Nicholson—Slade—Buller teases Zulu Right Wing into a premature attack—I shoot three Zulu leaders in five successive shots—Hackett's Counter attack—His wound—His character—Death of Arthur Bright—I recommend Buller for the Victoria Cross.

I WENT round the sentries twice during the night, although I did not anticipate an attack until daylight, feeling sure the large masses of Zulus I had seen could not make a combined movement in the dark. When the night was past, the mist was so thick that we could not see more than a hundred yards. Captain Maude, who had temporarily replaced Ronald Campbell, asked me if the wood-cutting party of two companies was to go out as usual. Our practice was that they should not start till the front was reported clear for 10 miles, but until the sun came out there was no chance of the mist clearing off, and after thinking over the matter I decided the party should go, because we had never been able to get up reserve of fuel, and it was possible the Zulus might not attack that day. Our men would certainly fight better in two or three days' time if they had cooked food, and so I accepted the risk, but ordered two subalterns to keep ponies saddled to recall the companies in good time. Fortunately, though 5 miles away, the place was behind the camp.

All the mounted men had been continuously in the saddle since daylight on the 23rd, and it was difficult to get a trot out of the horses;[1] but Commandant Raaf went out with 20 men to the edge of the Zunguin plateau, and when the mist

[1] One of my ponies had carried me 94 miles in fifty-four hours, without corn, getting only the grass he could find when knee-haltered.

lifted, about 10 a.m., reported the Zulu Army was cooking on the Umvolosi and a tributary stream.[1] He remained out himself to warn me when they advanced.

All our arrangments in camp were perfected, with the exception of the barricade, to which we had added some strengthening pieces.

The Dutchmen came to see me early in the day, to say that, as Piet Uys was dead they wished to go home, and, except half a dozen who had hired waggons to us, they departed. Great pressure had been brought on my gallant friend Piet to induce him to withdraw from the column. His friends told him he was a traitor to their cause, but Uys always replied that although he disliked our policy, he thought it was the duty of a White man to stand up with those who were fighting the Zulus.[2]

Between 80 and 100 of Uhamu's men, who held on to the cattle they had driven from the Inhlobane, were overtaken and killed near the Zunguin Mountain on the 28th, but in the battalion which had gone out with Colonel Buller there were very few casualties. Nevertheless, Zulu-like after a reverse, the two battalions of Wood's Irregulars, about 2000 strong, dispersed.

I spent the forenoon, after saying good-bye to the Uys detachment, in writing a report on the previous day's reconnaissance, and letters to the bereaved relatives of those who had fallen.

At 11 o'clock Raaf reported that the Zulu Army was advancing, and I sent the officers to recall the wood-cutting parties, and had all the Trek oxen driven in, except about 200 which had strayed away from the drivers, whose duty it was to herd them. We got the two companies back in time for the men to have a hasty dinner before the attack actually began. The commanding officers asked if the battalions might not be told to hurry their dinners, but I said, "No; there is plenty of time," for by the system enforced in the column during daylight, as Lord Chelmsford saw five weeks later, our

[1] Where Vryheid now stands.

[2] When in December 1878 I was endeavouring to get Dutchmen to join, some queried my impartiality as Arbitrator in deciding claims for captured cattle—the South African form of prize money,—and I rejoined, "I'll not take any for my personal use." I gave my share towards erecting a memorial to Piet Uys in Utrecht, and all the soldiers of the column contributed.

tents could be struck, and the men be in position in the laager, within seventy seconds from the last sound of the "Alert."

At 1.30 p.m. Colonel Buller suggested he should go out and harry the Zulus into a premature attack, and this he did admirably.

We had shifted camp several times for sanitary reasons. My friends the Dutchmen could never be persuaded to use the latrines, although I had one dug specially for them; moreover, Wood's Irregulars and the oxen had so fouled the ground as to induce fever, unless the camp was often shifted. The position in which we received the attack was on a ridge running in a south-westerly direction, an under feature of the Ngaba-ka-Hwane Mountain.

The waggons of the 13th Light Infantry formed the right front and flank, 4 guns were in front of the centre, and the 90th Light Infantry on the left. The Horse Lines were in the middle, and the rear face of the Laager was held by the Irregular Horse; 280 yards in front, on ground 20 feet higher than the Laager, was a redoubt, its main lines of fire being in a northerly and southerly direction, while 150 yards to the right front of the main Laager was a cattle Laager, into which we crammed upwards of 2000 oxen. The outer side of it stood on the edge of a deep ravine, into which the Laager drained. The wheels of the waggons were securely chained together, and the space between the forepart of one and the rear of the other was rendered difficult of ingress by the poles (or dyssel-booms), being lashed across the intervals.

Two guns under Lieutenant Nicholson were placed *en barbette*,[1] at the front end of the Redoubt. The other four guns came into action under Lieutenant A. Bigge[2] and Lieutenant Slade,[3] by sections on the ridge, connecting the Redoubt with the main Laager. The men belonged to Garrison Companies, but I have never known a battery so exceptionally fortunate in its Subalterns. Lieutenant Nicholson, standing on the gun platform, fought his guns with the unmoved stoical courage habitual to his nature.

Major Tremlett was renowned as a fearless sportsman, and both Bigge and Slade were unsurpassable; they with their

[1] Gun placed on raised ground, thus firing over the parapet.

[2] Now Colonel Sir Arthur Bigge, K.C.B.

[3] General F. Slade, C.B., lately Inspector-General, Royal Artillery.

gunners stood up in the open from 1.30 p.m. till the Zulus retreated at 5.30 p.m., and by utilising the ridge were enabled to find excellent targets with cover during the first attack on the southern slope, and later on the northern slope, and suffered but little loss.

The direction of the Zulu advance was, speaking generally, from south-east, but when they came in sight they stretched over the horizon from north-east to south-west, covering all approaches from the Inhlobane to Bemba's Kop. When still 3 miles distant, 5000 men moved round to our Left and attacked the side held by the 90th Light Infantry, prior to the remainder of the Zulu Army coming into action. This fortunate circumstance was due to Colonel Buller's skilful tactical handling of the mounted men, whom he took out and dismounted half a mile from the Zulus. The Umbonambi regiment suffered a galling fire for some time, and then, losing patience, rushed forward to attack, when the horsemen, remounting, retired 400 yards, and, repeating their tactics, eventually brought on a determined attack from the Zulu right flank. The Umbonambi followed up the horsemen until they were within 300 yards of the Laager, when their further advance was checked by the accurate firing of the 90th Light Infantry, greatly assisted by the enfilading fire poured in from the northern face of the Redoubt. I saw a fine tall Chief running on well in front of his men, until, hit in the leg, he fell to the ground. Two men endeavoured to help him back as he limped on one foot. One was immediately shot, but was replaced by another, and eventually all three were killed.

We now sent the Artillery horses back into the Laager, keeping the guns in the open, on the ridge between the Redoubt and the main Laager. I had instructed the officer commanding to serve his guns till the last moment, and then, if necessary, leaving them in the open, take his men back to the Laager, which was within 188 yards.

The attack on our Left had so slackened as to give me no further anxiety, when at 2.15 p.m. heavy masses attacked our Right Front and Right Rear, having passed under cover up the deep ravine, on the edge of which the cattle Laager stood.

Some 40 Zulus, using Martini-Henry rifles which they had taken at Isandwhlana, occupied ground between the edge

of the ravine and the rear of the Laager, from the fire of which they were partly covered by the refuse from the Horse Lines which had been there deposited, for, with the extraordinary fertility of South Africa, induced by copious rains and burning midday sun, a patch of mealies 4 feet high afforded cover to men lying down, and it was from thence that our serious losses occurred somewhat later. The Zulu fire induced me to withdraw a company of the 13th, posted at the right rear of the cattle Laager, although the front was held by another half company for some time longer.

I could see from where I stood on the ridge of land just outside the fort, leaning against the barricade, which reached down to the cattle Laager, that there were large bodies in the ravine, the Ngobamakosi in front, and 30 men (leaders) showed over the edge, endeavouring to encourage the Regiment to leave the shelter, and charge. I, in consequence, sent Captain Maude to order out two companies of the 90th, under Major Hackett, with instructions to double over the slope down to the ravine with fixed bayonets, and to fall back at once when they had driven the Zulus below the crest.

A 13th man coming away late from the cattle Laager, not having heard the order to retire, was shot by the Zulus lying in the refuse heap, and followed by four from the cattle Laager. I was running out to pick him up, when Captain Maude exclaimed, "Really it isn't your place to pick up single men," and went out himself, followed by Lieutenants Lysons and Smith, 90th Light Infantry; they were bringing the man in, who was shot in the leg, when, as they were raising the stretcher, Smith was shot through the arm. I was firing at the time at a leader of the Ngobamakosi, who, with a red flag, was urging his comrades to come up out of the ravine, and assault the Laager. Private Fowler, one of my personal escort, who was lying in the ditch of the fort, had asked me, "Would you kindly take a shot at that Chief, sir? it's a quarter of an hour I am shooting him, and cannot hit him at all." He handed me his Swinburne-Henry carbine, and looking at the sight, which was at 250 yards, I threw the rifle into my shoulder, and as I pressed it into the hollow, the barrel being very hot, I pulled the trigger before I was ready,—indeed, as I was bringing up the muzzle from the Zulu's feet. Hit in the

pit of the stomach, he fell over backwards: another leader at once took his place, cheering his comrades on. At him I was obliged to fire, unpleasantly close to the line of our officers leading the counter attack. I saw the bullet strike some few yards over the man's shoulder, and, laying the carbine next time at the Zulu's feet, the bullet struck him on the breast-bone. As he reeled lifeless backward, another leader seized and waved the flag, but he knelt only, though he continued to cheer. The fourth shot struck the ground just over his shoulder, and then, thinking the carbine was over-sighted,[1] I aimed on the ground 2 yards short, and the fifth bullet struck him on the chest in the same place as his predecessor had been hit. This and the counter attack so damped the ardour of the leaders that no further attempt was made in that direction, although several brave charges were made to the south of the cattle Laager, against the right flank of the Redoubt. While I was firing at the leaders of the Ngobamakosi Regiment, who, from the ground falling away towards the ravine, were out of sight of the main Laager, the two companies 90th Light Infantry came out at a steady "Double," Major Hackett leading, guided by Captain Woodgate, who knew exactly where I wished the companies to go, and how far the offensive movement was to be carried out. Lieutenant Strong, who had recently joined us, ran well in front of his company, sword in hand, and the Zulus retired into the ravine. The companies, however, were fired on heavily from the refuse heaps, at 350 yards range, and Major Hackett was shot through the head; Arthur Bright fell mortally wounded, and the Colour-Sergeant of Bright's company, Allen, a clever young man, not twenty-three years of age, who had been wounded in the first attack, and, having had his arm dressed, rejoined his company as it charged, was killed.

The Umcityu and Unkandampenvu had charged so determinedly over the open on our Left front, as had part of the Ngobamakosi up the slope to the Redoubt, from the south side of the cattle Laager, that I did not at first realise the full effect of Hackett's counter attack, and apprehended the mass still crouching below the crest would rush the Right face of the Laager. They would have had some 200 yards to pass over

[1] We paced it afterwards—195 yards.

from the edge of the ravine to the waggons, but, owing to the ground falling rapidly, would have been under fire from the Laager for 100 yards only. I therefore went into the main Laager, being met by Colonel Buller, who asked me cheerily for what I had come, and I replied, "Because I think you are just going to have a rough and tumble"; but Hackett's charge had done even more than I had hoped, and having looked round I went back to my position just outside the fort.

At 5.30 p.m., when the vigour of the attack was lessening, I sent Captain Thurlow and Waddy's companies of the 13th Light Infantry to the right rear of the cattle Laager, to turn out some Zulus who were amongst the oxen, which they had, however, been unable to remove; and I took Captain Laye's[1] company to the edge of the krantz on the right front of the Laager, where they did great execution with the bayonet amongst the Undi Regiment, who were now falling back. I then sent a note to Buller, asking him to take out the mounted men, which he did, pursuing from 5.30 p.m. till dark, and killing, as it happened, chiefly the Makulusi tribe, who had been his foes on the previous day.

When the enemy fell back in the direction in which they had come, they were so thick as to blot out all signs of grass on the hillside, which was covered by their black bodies, and for perhaps the only time in anyone's experience it was sound to say, "Don't wait to aim, fire into the black of them."

At 3 a.m. on the 30th, one or two shots from the Outpost line roused the camp, and the Colonial corps opened a rapid fire to the Front, immediately over the heads of the two line battalions and artillery, who stood perfectly steady. Rain was falling, so, while Maude was ascertaining the cause of the firing, which was a Zulu who, having concealed himself till then, jumped up close to one of our sentries, I sat in an ambulance near the battery until the Colonials having put three bullets into the top of it, I thought it would be better to get wet than be shot by our own men. After five minutes the firing was stopped. The scare was excusable, for the nerves of the mounted men had been highly strung for some hours, a fourth of those who had ridden up the Inhlobane having been killed.

In the next few days we buried 785 men within 300

[1] Now General Laye, C.B.

yards of our Laager, which we were afterwards obliged to shift on account of the number of bodies which lay unseen in the hollows. We learnt after the battle that when the Zulus saw our tents go down they thought it was in preparation for flight, and that unsteadied their Right Wing.[1] They never fought again with the same vigour and determination.

The Line battalions were very steady, expending in four hours on an average 33 rounds a man; though that evening I heard that some of them had thought the possibility of resisting such overwhelming numbers of brave savages, 13 or 14 to one man, was more than doubtful. I had no doubt, and lost all sense of personal danger, except momentarily, when, as on five occasions, a plank of the hoarding on which I leant was struck. This jarred my head, and reminded me that the Zulus firing from the refuse heap in the right rear of the Laager were fair shots. A few had been employed as hunters, and understood the use of the Martini rifles taken at Isandwhana.

Besides the men killed, we had 70 wounded, and amongst them my friend Robert Hackett. Born in King's County, Ireland, he was one of several soldier brothers. He was decidedly old-fashioned, and I have now before me an indignant letter, written four years before his terrible wound, urging me to use my influence to stop what he regarded as the craze for examining officers like himself, nearly forty years of age. He pointed out the injustice of expecting old dogs to learn these new tricks, and argued that as he had bought his commission without any liability to be examined for promotion, it was unjust to exact any such test from him now; and added that, as no Staff appointment would tempt him to leave the battalion, and it was generally admitted that he was efficient in all Regimental duties, all he wanted was to be left alone, and not troubled with books.

He was, indeed, a good Regimental officer; he managed the Mess, the Canteen, and the Sports club, and, indeed, was a pillar of the regiment. He kept a horse, but seldom, or never, rode, putting it generally at the disposal of the subaltern of his

[1] Zulu Chiefs told me in 1880, when they saw our tents struck at 1.15 p.m., they made certain of victory, believing we were about to retreat, and they were greatly depressed by our stubborn resistance.

company. He played no games, and lived for nothing but the welfare of the men of his Company, and the reputation of the Regiment.

At Aldershot, in 1873, he gave me a lesson which I have never forgotten. I was senior Major, being in temporary command of the Regiment, and spoke to him about three young officers who did not pay their mess bills when due, and when the delay recurred the third time, I said, "Unless these bills are paid to-morrow morning, you will put the three officers under arrest." The Commanding Officer being away, I was in the Orderly-room when he reported, "The bills you spoke of have been paid, sir." "You see," I remarked, "it only required a little firmness on our part to get the Queen's Regulations obeyed." He saluted, but said nothing, and when I saw him in the afternoon I said, "Hackett, I do not quite understand your reticence. Why don't you help me in making these young officers pay their bills by the proper time? Why do they delay?" "Oh, it's not wilful, sir," he replied—"only impecuniosity." "Oh, that can't be the case," I argued, "because when they had to pay, they paid." He only answered "Yes"; but something in his tone made me say, "If you are right, can you explain how they got the money at such short notice?" "That's quite simple, sir," he answered; "I paid the bills myself." After this I thought less of the effect of my firmness!

When I visited him in the Hospital the morning after the action, he was a piteous sight, for a bullet had passed from one temple to another, and, without actually hitting the eyes, had protruded the eyeballs, injuring the brain. He was unconscious of the terrible nature of his wounds, possibly from pressure on the brain, and observed to me, "Your Commissariat officers are very stingy in not lighting up this Hospital tent; the place is in absolute darkness." We were all so fond of him that nobody ventured to tell him the truth, and it was not until he was in Maritzburg that the doctors begged a lady, who was a constant visitor at the Hospital, to break the news to him.

When we received, on the 4th January 1879, the Gazette of the Promotions and Honours for the suppression of the Gaika outbreak, I addressed the Military Secretary as follows: "Lord Chelmsford writes to me a kind letter about the omission of

my name when honours were being served out, but I am not likely to trouble you on my own account, especially as one Commanding Officer rewarded has never been within 500 miles of bloodshed, but I confess Brevet Major Hackett might have attracted your, or His Royal Highness', favourable eye. A man of long service, old enough to be father of the junior Captains, he has, I believe, been for many years the bed-rock of the 90th Light Infantry. An excellent Regimental officer, ever ready to counsel or aid those of his brothers whose follies, or scanty purses, brought them into trouble. He has successfully neutralised the bad points of two Commanding Officers."

When in the Hospital at the close of the action, I did not speak to Arthur Bright, who was dozing, but after we had had something to eat I sent Maude over to see how he was going on. Maude came back saying that he was sensible, but very depressed, although the doctors said a bullet which had passed through his thigh had not touched any artery or bone. The two doctors had more than they could do, and may therefore be readily excused for not having noticed that the other thigh bone had been shattered; and Bright died, happily without pain, before morning. Over six feet in height, and very handsome, he exercised, through his high moral tone, great influence amongst the subalterns. He had been captain of a boat at Eton, was our boldest and best Polo player, and was a gifted draughtsman, possessing also a beautiful tenor voice. He had only fifteen months' service when he took command of the company of which Maude was the Captain. This company had been unfortunate, for Stevens, its Captain, was dangerously wounded on the 30th April 1878, when Saltmarshe was killed; and now, in one day it had lost its only duty officer, Bright, and the gallant Colour-Sergeant Allen.

For two or three days after our victory I had some anxiety on account of our convoy of wounded men, which Buller escorted to the Blood River. My battalion was unfortunate, for, in addition to the two officers of the 90th whom we buried, we sent away three wounded in the convoy. I was obliged to keep Maude to help me, in spite of his company being without an officer.

Lieutenant Smith, whose arm was badly hit, was invalided

to England. After seeing his family, he went to stay with Lady Wood, and, while he was giving his account of the fight in the drawing-room, his soldier servant was telling my wife's servants about it in the kitchen; and, alluding to the time when I walked across the open to the Laager, he said, "We saw three Zulus following him, and we knew he couldn't hear 'em, so we turned our faces away that we might not see him assegaied!" "Ah," the cook said, with deep emotion, "that would have been a sad day for his wife and children!" when the soldier observed cheerfully, "Oh, we weren't thinking of them, or of him either, for the matter of that, but what would have become of *us* if 'e'd been killed?"

I heard from Lord Chelmsford, who said he observed in my official report of my attack on the Inhlobane that I had made no reference to his having induced it; and, while thanking him for his generosity, I replied that I considered I was bound to help him, and that the operation I undertook was, moreover, feasible, and would have been carried out without any serious loss except for the coincidence of the approach of the Zulu main army.

30*th March*.—Although nearly all of Wood's Irregulars had deserted the previous evening, we still had the Zulus attached to the companies, as well as the drivers and foreloupers of the waggons, and, knowing it was hopeless to expect them to bring in, without reward, any Zulus as prisoners, I made it known I would give a "stick" of tobacco for any wounded or unwounded Zulu who was brought into camp. During the fight it was difficult to spare wounded Zulus who could sit up, for, when I took out a company from the Redoubt for a counter attack at 5.30, an officer shouted, "Look out for that wounded Zulu behind you." He fired immediately, killing a soldier who followed me. When all resistance was over, I was anxious, not only for the sake of humanity, but in order to make an accurate report, to ascertain what regiments had attacked us. So I instructed our men to bring me, if possible, a representative of every Zulu regiment engaged.

Next morning, 15 or 20 grand specimens of savage humanity stood in front of me, while the interpreter took down their names and the names of the officers commanding the regiment to which they belonged, and we learnt that the Zulu

army had numbered over 23,000 men. When I had obtained all the information I required, I said, "Before Isandwhlana, we treated all your wounded men in our Hospital, but when you attacked our camp, your brethren, our black patients, rose and helped to kill those who had been attending on them. Can any of you advance any reason why I should not kill you?" One of the younger men, with an intelligent face, asked, "May I speak?" "Yes." "There is a very good reason why you should not kill us. We kill you because it is the custom of the Black men, but it isn't the White men's custom!" So, putting them in charge of an officer and a couple of Colonel Buller's men, I had them sent safely past our Outposts, as far as the Zunguin mountain.

We got in a considerable number of wounded Zulus, and as our Hospital establishment was not capable of dealing with our own cases, I was obliged to hand them over to their countrymen attached to the companies of infantry; and to ensure the wounded men being well treated, I promised our Zulus an ox to eat at the end of the week. There was, however, but little animosity when once the fight was over, because all the border Zulus were so intermarried that we had cases of men fighting in Cetewayo's regiments against brothers in Wood's Irregulars.

It is not often that the narratives of victors and vanquished agree, so it is interesting to note that the Governor of Natal, in reporting to the High Commissioner on the 21st April, wrote:

"The whole of the Zulu border population have returned to their homes. In conversation with our Natives, they give accounts of the two days' fighting with Colonel Wood, which agree with the published accounts in every respect. The Zulu losses on the first day are stated to have been severe. The Europeans who fell selling their lives dearly."

I had heard many stories of the gallantry shown by Colonel Buller in the retreat from the western end of the Inhlobane, but I had some difficulty in arriving at anything definite, because he guarded closely all the mounted men from receiving orders except through him, and I knew from his character that he would repudiate the notion of having done anything more than his duty.

A few days after the fight he went out with a troop of the Frontier Light Horse to endeavour to find Captain Barton's body, but could not reach the spot, as he was opposed by Zulus in force, making a raid in the direction of Luneberg, carrying off cattle, and killing men, women, and children. While he was out I received written statements from Lieutenants D'Arcy and Everitt and trooper Rundall, whom he had rescued at the risk of his life, and their reports were verified by those of other officers who were present. This enabled me to put forward a strong recommendation that his name should be considered for the Victoria Cross. A day or two later, on his return from another raid, in which he had been unsuccessful, I said, as he was leaving the tent after making his report, "I think you may be interested in something I have written," and I handed him the letter-book. He was very tired, and observed somewhat ungraciously, "Some nonsense, I suppose!" to which I replied, "Yes, I think I have been rather eulogistic." When he handed me back the book his face was a study.

CHAPTER XXXII

1879—THE PRINCE IMPERIAL

Collecting Supplies and Transport—Summary justice on a dishonest trader —Mistaken identity—Fresh bread—Our system for baking—A practical lesson to a young officer—The Flying Column returns to Natal—An overworked Leader.

FIVE companies of the 80th Regiment now joined my column from Luneberg; and, the evening before they marched in, Buller came to me and asked if a protecting certificate might be given to his Regimental Sergeant-Major. "What do you mean?" I asked. "Well, he is about the best man in the Frontier Light Horse," he replied, "but he has just been to me to say that he is a deserter from the 80th, and as he is sure to be recognised to-morrow, he intends to be off to-night, unless you will condone his offence, and give him a protecting certificate." This I did, and the man served with credit until the end of the war.

I spent the next two months in collecting provisions, not only for my own column, now numbering 2500 Europeans, but in anticipation of the wants of others, as I knew insufficient steps were being taken at Helpmakaar; and by the 15th May I had succeeded in collecting at Balte Spruit 100 days' food for 4000 Europeans, and a fortnight's food for the horses and animals of No. 4 Column.

In February, when the Column was encamped at Kambula, a trader, who had a brother-in-law in the Volksraad at Pretoria, came into camp with waggons, asking to be allowed to sell groceries to the troops. I saw the man, and he assured me that he had no alcohol of any description; but I would not allow him to unpack his waggons until he had given me a certificate in writing that his verbal statement was accurate.

In the evening I received a report that a small raiding party of Zulus was murdering natives to the north of Rorke's Drift, and I ordered Captain Maude to go with a few mounted men and two companies of Wood's Irregulars to the spot. At nine o'clock the party was still in camp, waiting for some of the natives who had not finished cooking, and I sent Ronald Campbell down to try and start them. He came on the trader, who was selling trade gin at 1s. a glass to the soldiers, some of whom were already drunk. Campbell had the man seized, and sent for me. There was a full moon, and I executed summary justice by its light: ordering the man to be tied up to the wheel of his own waggon, I sent for two buglers, and gave him two dozen lashes on the spot, upset the whole of his liquor (which must have been a considerable loss, for he had a large quantity under the groceries), and informed him that unless he trekked at daylight, I would impound his waggons and oxen for the rest of the campaign.

I received, a few weeks later, various legal letters concerning an action with Damages laid at £5000, to which I paid no attention, as I was in an enemy's country. The Administrator and I had interfered with the sale of liquor at Utrecht, and the trader, who got summary justice, also wished to "take the Law of me."

In the month of May I was riding one morning into Utrecht, attended by bugler Walkinshaw, when, a few miles to the north of Balte Spruit, we met a horseman, who, stopping me, asked if he "was on the right track to Colonel Wood's Camp, and also whether the road was safe?" I told him he was quite safe until he got to Balte Spruit, as there was a Company there, but that after he turned out of the valley to the eastward, there was a certain amount of risk, unarmed people travelling only with an escort. "What sort of a man is this Colonel Wood?" he asked. "Well," I replied, "some people like him, and some dislike him." "I have been told that he is very rough." "Yes, that is so, when he is vexed." "I am an officer of the High Court of the Transvaal, and I am going to him with a writ. Do you think he will be violent with me?" "Oh no, I'm certain he won't." "Then you think there is no risk as far as he is concerned?" "None whatever; but you had better not mention your business in the camp, as his own battalion is at

Kambula Hill, and it might be bad for you if the men got to know your errand." "Why? What do you think they would do to me—kill me?" "Oh no; the worst that would happen to you would be to be tarred and feathered." "I don't like this job that I am on. I think, if you'll allow me, I'd like to turn back and ride with you into Utrecht, and send the document by post." Accordingly we rode along together, and I showed him the post office in the little town before I went about my business.

Lord Chelmsford came to visit me early in May, and stopped for several days, bringing with him the Prince Imperial, who returned to me as a guest a fortnight later. The young Prince impressed me much by his soldier-like ideas and habits, and was unwearied in endeavouring to acquire knowledge and Military experience. The Prince accompanied Colonel Redvers Buller on some patrols, and on his return from one on the 21st May I observed at dinner, "Well, you have not been assegaied, as yet?" "No; but while I have no wish to be killed, if it were to be I would rather fall by assegai than bullets, as that would show we were at close quarters."

I went out to the north side of the Inhlobane and buried Charles Potter and Mr. Williams. Uhamus' men had stood bravely by the white men. Many dead Makulusi lay around, and Captain Potter's body was alongside that of a Chief of Uhamus' tribe. I was obliged to postpone till later the burial of Piet Uys, whose body lay on the lower plateau of the mountain, 1000 feet above us, as Makulusi held the ground.

Though my relations with the Commissariat Departments were friendly, it was, I thought, essential to write forcibly, and on the 25th April Lord Chelmsford supported my views in a letter. "It is of no use, however, thinking of Ulundi, until Commissariat and Transport are in better order."

I irritated the Heads of Departments—for there were "Heads" although there were no bodies—by my plain speaking. I represented frequently that an Ordnance Department scarcely existed, and that the Hospital arrangements were totally inadequate. I pointed out that No. 4 Column had been for a fortnight without castor-oil, in spite of the fact that there was a daily post from Newcastle to the Column, and that from Maritzburg up to Newcastle there were two mail carts weekly.

I was taken to task for having used the word "disgraceful," but maintained it, asserting that there was no other word which adequately expressed the want of system.

Eventually, after much expenditure of time occupied in angry correspondence with Civil authorities, showing that the natives sent to me from the Wakkerstroom district who had deserted, carrying away Government horses, guns, and blankets, had never been sent back, my friend Mr. Rudolph, the Landdrost, was placed over the two districts of Utrecht and Wakkerstroom, and then attention was paid to my requisitions.

Lord Chelmsford consulted me at this time with reference to an Expedition proposed against Sekukuni, although we were less prepared to undertake such than we were when the previous attack was abandoned in September. I wrote to his Lordship, "In my opinion we are not strong enough, either in Generals, Troops, or Departmental officers, to attempt more than we have on hand," and he decided that the matter must stand over until we had settled with Cetewayo.

No. 4 was now renamed "The Flying Column," and I was told during the month that I was to help General Newdigate by offering him the results of my experiences, and also by supplying him with waggons. This I did to the extent of 37, about the number I had then bought in the Free State, Lord Chelmsford writing to me that the 2nd Division would be unable to advance until I provided the waggons.

I had been cutting firewood and digging coal for General Newdigate, and from the 19th of the month sent to the Second Division 40,000 lbs. daily. By Rudolph's exertions I got Zulus to act as drivers, and was enabled to use the waggons which had been lying idle, and had already cost us in a short time £4000. As the nominal strength of the 2nd Division was only about 2500, we soon handed over as much coal as they could carry; its great economy consisted in that 1 lb. was of better value for cooking purposes than 3 lbs. of wood. I should have been ready to advance by the middle of May had not I been obliged to lend waggons, for I had collected sufficient to carry twenty-five days' food for men and ten days' mealies for horses.

A draft of 80 men for the 13th Light Infantry landed early in May, but only 45 came into the field, the others being

invalided between Durban and Utrecht, a march of about 250 miles.

On the 1st of June we encamped on the Umvunyana River within a short distance of the 2nd Division, and I describe here the system by which I kept the Flying Column supplied with fresh bread throughout our advance, which was necessarily slow, to enable the cattle to graze.

I generally accompanied the Advance guard, and when satisfied there were no considerable force of the enemy within striking distance, the bakers with the ovens followed me in mule waggons. Having chosen the site for the camp, I personally selected the site for the bakery, which was at once dug out, and fires lighted. Although the weather was no longer as wet as it had been, yet we seldom got the first batch of bread out under eight hours, for if the "sponge" was put in before the ground was thoroughly dry, the bread was not fit for consumption. The bakers worked all night, and stopping behind the next day until the Rear guard moved off, baked up to the last moment; sleeping that day and the following night, they started again on the third day with the Advance guard, and thus worked throughout alternate nights. The boon to the Column was great. I sent a daily present to the Head Quarters Staff, and to General Newdigate, under whom I had served at Aldershot.

I attribute the health of the Flying Column to some extent to the fresh bread, but also to the fact that the men invariably had a meat breakfast. Early in June the Commissariat wrote to me complaining that I had overdrawn thousands of rations. This did not perturb me. Sending for Colonel Buller, I told him my difficulty; and, going out himself with a squadron, he returned in a few hours with enough cattle to repay our overdraw, and to leave a handsome surplus in the hands of the Commissariat.

Our difficulties may to some extent be realised by the statement that on the 1st June it took us two hours and a half to start our ox waggons, owing to the inexperience of the drivers; but in the evening we encamped near the 2nd Division, from which the Prince Imperial, with an escort of six Colonials, had gone out that morning on duty.

At sunset the British officer and four survivors of the party rode into the 2nd Division camp, reporting that the Prince, who had been sketching sites for camps, had been killed. Next morning we sent forward a party of Basutos, who picked up the Prince's body, shortly before a squadron of the 17th Lancers, sent out from the 2nd Division, arrived. I defer the story of his death, as I learned it from the mouths of the attacking party, 17 of whom told me the facts on the spot in the following year; but I may here state the body was unmutilated except for wounds, for he had fought until the end, and was pierced by eighteen assegais. Two White men were lying 50 yards from him.

The officer, arraigned before a Court-Martial for misbehaviour, alleged the Prince was in command of the party, but I have had a strange and convincing piece of evidence before me for many years, in the Prince's own hand-writing, that he was serving under the British officer, and was therefore in no sense responsible for the disaster. Light rain was falling early on the 1st June, and when the party started the Prince was wearing a Pocket Siphonia.[1] He had been unusually well taught; his plans submitted for redoubts to defend depôts showing not only great natural talent, but that he had thoroughly assimilated the sound instruction imparted at the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich. On previous patrols he had taken full notes, and on the 1st June had filled the sheet of a writing pad thus: "1st June.—Started from Itilezi to find camping-ground for 2nd Division; party under Captain ——"; and then follows an itinerary with a panoramic sketch, the last entry being dated 1.30 p.m. The Prince, tearing these notes off the pad, had put the paper into the ticket pocket of the waterproof; and when, after the war, various articles belonging to His Imperial Highness were recovered, the coat, having been sent to Chislehurst, was being sponged and straightened out, for the waterproofing had caused it to stick together, a lump in the ticket pocket was noticed, which was found to be the sheet of the writing pad. I was kept up very late that night, many correspondents coming to me to furnish Natives to ride to the nearest telegraph office with an account of the misfortune.

[1] A very light waterproof of the day, advertised: "To be carried in the pocket."

A young Transport officer appeared from the Base, and reported he had lost three of his waggons; disregarding the remonstrances of his superior officers, who wished me to send a conductor, I insisted on the young man going back himself. Although he did not find the waggons, which arrived safely next morning, yet the Transport officers realised that it was useless to come into the Flying Column camp until they had brought in all their party.

On the 5th June, when the two columns were encamped 20 miles from Ibabanango, the Head Quarters Staff were having tea with me when my orderly officer Lysons arrived with a message from Redvers Buller. He was skirmishing with a large Zulu force, which was following him up. As the Staff departed, they shook me warmly by the hand, wishing me good luck. Taking out my watch, I laughed, saying "I am obliged to you, but you are much mistaken if you think we are going to have a fight. It is half-past three, and there are less than two hours of daylight; and, with the Zulus 5 miles off us, there is no chance of our being engaged to-night." My forecast was correct.

On the 7th of June the Flying Column was sent back to Natal to bring up more provisions, off-loading our food, and taking back the empty waggons of both forces. Oxen make no difficulty in crossing any place with an empty waggon, but as the rivers can only be entered and traversed at certain places, especially the Nondweni,[1] the crossing of such was a question of many hours, and gave rise to some anxiety. Although we now knew that Umbiline was dead, and that renegade Swazi had been our most active foe on the sources of the White Umvolosi, I nevertheless kept two squadrons out 10 miles on the north, or danger flank; and to ensure them being on the alert, always visited them before daylight, which gave me little opportunity for sleep; but we arrived without incident at Landtman's Drift on the 9th of June. We started back again on the 13th, and as I had just received a report that our scouts covering the coal-cutting parties had been driven in, considering that I had 660 vehicles to convoy, my position was one of considerable anxiety. On the veldt they were able to travel fifteen abreast; but when we crossed the Nondweni on

[1] Locally called the Upoko.

the 16th there were only three practical places, and each required repairing parties of a hundred men with pick and shovel. The drivers all knew which was the danger flank, and I foresaw that they would try to cut in as the front of the Column became reduced from fifteen to three waggons, and therefore placed officers on the top of the steep bank of the river to ensure that the waggons had halted, and descended in regular rotation; for once a collision occurred on a slope, the oxen telescoped, and it took us a quarter of an hour to disentangle them.

I was in the river superintending a party digging out the egress on the south side, when, looking round, I saw five waggon drivers racing for the descent on the north side, while the officer on duty was sitting with his back to them smoking, apparently quite unconcerned. The water being up to the horse girths, and the bottom strewn with rocks, rendered rapid movement impossible, which added to the irritation I felt. I was overworked, had had no sleep while on the line of march, and, forgetting manners and propriety, I lifted up my voice and cursed him, saying, "You d——d infernal —— idiot of an officer." The words were no sooner out of my mouth than I regretted the vulgarity and want of dignity shown in losing my temper. It flashed across my mind that the lazy officer belonged to another Corps. Regimental feeling would allow me (a 90th man) great latitude in addressing one of my comrades, but the fact of my nominally commanding the 90th would add to the vexation of an officer of another Regiment on hearing such language applied to him. My contrition was increased by the echo: in the deep valley, seven times those vulgar swear words were repeated, gradually becoming fainter in the distance. Suddenly I heard the cheery voice of the lazy one's[1] Commanding officer, "Ay, ay, sir, I'll talk to him;" and then followed a string of expletives in comparison to which my language might be considered fit for a drawing-room.

My want of self-control was excusable, since I had come to the end of my physical strength. From the 2nd of January, except to wash, I had never undressed nor had my boots off, and had been sleeping like a watch-dog! and, besides

[1] Lately Commanding a district in the United Kingdom.

my military duties, I was still acting as Political Agent, which took up a certain amount of time. When I rejoined Lord Chelmsford on the Nondweni River, I was obliged to have my face tied up for a week, suffering from continuous neuralgic pains in the eyes, coupled with gastric neuralgia.

CHAPTER XXIII

1879—ULUNDI

A woman in a basket—"Wait for the waggon"—Bill Beresford earns the Victoria Cross — Zulu attacks on our square feeble, and isolated — Rundle's guns always outside square—Lord Wolseley arrives—I return to England—Tribute to the Prince Imperial.

GENERAL NEWDIGATE played a joke on me as we passed his camp. When leaving for the frontier with the empty waggons, I sent him a very old woman, virtually nothing but skin and bone. She was bright and intelligent, but so emaciated that we lifted her about in a basket no larger than a fish basket given in a London shop. I had personally carried her out of a burning kraal to save her life, and, not wanting to take her farther from her own people, I sent her over to General Newdigate on the day I marched back to Landtman's Drift, with my compliments, and expression of a hope that he would feed her. This he did; but when I returned to my camp on the evening of the 16th, for I had ridden nearly to the spot where we intended to encamp next day, I found the old woman waiting for me, the General having sent her back by an orderly, who carried her as if she were a parcel of fish, saying, "General Newdigate's compliments, and he thinks you would like to have the old woman back again."

I was ahead with the Advanced guard, when the bands of the 13th and 90th Light Infantry, as they passed the 2nd Division camp, played with fine sarcasm, "Wait for the Waggon," there having been considerable emulation in the two Columns, the 2nd Division wanting to lead, and the Flying Column wanting to keep its place. It did so, led into Ulundi, and followed in the rear of the 2nd Division when Lord Chelmsford came back to the high ground.

On the 1st of July we descended the Entonjaneni to the

White Umvolosi, 5 miles south of Ulundi. Moving off before 7 a.m., it was nearly two o'clock before the last of the 100 waggons of the Flying Column were laagered, and had the Zulus shown the initiative and audacity which characterised them early in the war, they might have inflicted severe loss upon us, if they had not indeed destroyed a portion of the force. They were, however, then discussing the terms of peace to be offered to Lord Chelmsford, and on the 2nd of July, at a meeting attended by the Prime Minister, Mnyamane, who was present at the attack at Kambula, and Sirayo, and four other Chiefs, it was resolved to send to the British General "the Royal Coronation white cattle." These had indeed started, and were within 5 miles of our camp when the Umcityu (sharp pointed) Regiment drove them back, and insisted on the Chiefs giving battle.

On the 3rd of July I sent Colonel Redvers Buller across the Umvolosi to reconnoitre the ground on which Lord Chelmsford fought on the following day, and although he lost three men killed and the same number wounded, the information obtained was worth more than the lives of a larger number of soldiers. That day at twelve o'clock I had 120 of our trek oxen, which, taken at Isandwhlana, had been sent by Cetewayo to us, driven back across the Umvolosi. These cattle had been accepted only on the condition that Cetewayo complied with the demands which the High Commissioner had made on him.

That afternoon Lord Chelmsford told me he wished the Flying Column to lead the attack. Parading the Column, I said, "Now, my men, we have done with laagering, and we are going to meet the Zulus in the open; you will remember how on the 24th of January I read out to you the news of the disaster at Isandwhlana, so I expect that you will to-day believe that anything I tell you is, to the best of my judgment, correct. I cannot promise that you will all be alive to-morrow evening, but if you remain steady, and wait for the word of the officers before delivering your fire, I promise you that at sundown there will be no Zulu within reach of our mounted men, and that you will not see any from an early hour in the day."

At 6.30 next morning we moved over the river, marching in hollow square; we stood on some rising ground selected by Colonel Buller the previous day, and on which for five-and-

twenty minutes we were attacked by 12,000 or 15,000 Zulus. The Regiments came on in a hurried, disorderly manner, which contrasted strangely with the methodical, steady order in which they had advanced at Kambula on the 29th of March, for now not only battalions, but regiments, became mixed up before they came under fire. There were most Regiments represented on our left; the actual front of the square was attacked by the Udloko and Amahwenkwee, about 3000 men. Usibebu was the only Chief who came within 600 yards of us, and when he was wounded, his Regiment, the Udloko, generally lost heart, although, the moment the firing ceased and I rode out to the front of the square to where Lieutenant H. M. L. Rundle, Royal Artillery, had been working two machine guns, I counted sixty dead bodies in the long grass within seventy paces of the front of the Gatlings.

When the attack slackened and our men began to cheer, led by men who had not been at Kambula, I angrily ordered them to be silent, saying, "The fun has scarcely begun;" but their instinct was more accurate than mine, who, having seen the Zulus come on grandly for over four hours in March, could not believe they would make so half-hearted an attack.

As we marched back to our camp the men remarked that their General's forecast of the previous day was accurate.

Although I was satisfied that the war was now over, inasmuch as single men of Wood's Irregulars, of which there were about 500, were willing to go anywhere in Zululand with a message, we did not omit any precautions. Scouting parties preceded the Column, and flankers were pushed out, as we moved towards the coast to meet Sir Garnet Wolseley, and not until the 20th of July did I take my clothes off at night. The day after the action, I wrote to Lord Chelmsford's Staff officer: "His Excellency has frequently been good enough to speak with approbation of the order, regularity, and celerity of this Column. I feel that eighteen months of incessant work in the Field, which has not been without anxiety, more or less constant, makes it advisable, both in the interest of the Service, and for the sake of my own health and efficiency, that I should have a relaxation of work if only for a short time. I desire, therefore, to place on record that the good service done by this Column is due to the cheerful, untiring obedience of soldiers of all Ranks,

which has rendered my executive duties a source of continued pleasure, and to the efforts of the undermentioned Staff, Regimental, and Departmental officers, many of whom have worked day and night to carry out my wishes. . . ."

Lord Chelmsford that evening published a congratulatory order to the Troops, ending thus:—

"The two Columns being about to separate, the Lieutenant-General begs to tender his best thanks to Brigadier-General E. Wood, V.C., C.B., for the assistance rendered him during the recent operations." [1]

I received a letter dated the 9th July, Port Durnford, from Sir Garnet Wolseley: "Just a line to congratulate you on all you have done for the State. You and Buller have been the bright spots in this miserable war, and all through I have felt proud that I numbered you among my friends, and companions-in-arms."

On the 15th of July, Sir Garnet Wolseley and his Staff arrived at sunset, and intimated his intention of seeing the Column next morning. In order to mark the difference between War and Peace service, I had caused a supply of pipeclay to be brought from Natal, and throughout the night of the 14th our men were employed in washing out the coffee colour with which we had stained our white belts in January, and pipeclaying them, so that next day when we marched past, although the clothing was ragged, the men's belts and rifles were as clean as if they had been parading in Hyde Park.

I entertained the General and his Staff, and at dinner Sir Garnet Wolseley asked me: "Who were the Natives I saw going westwards over the hill at the rear of the camp?" I replied: "Wood's Irregulars, who were engaged to serve

[1] Lord Chelmsford to the Secretary of State for War:—

"ENTONJANENI, *7th July* 1879.

"I cannot refrain from bringing again to your special notice the names of Brigadier-General Evelyn Wood, V.C., C.B., . . . whose service during the advance towards Ulundi from the advanced Base, and during the recent successful operations near Ulundi, have been invaluable.

"Brigadier-General Wood, although suffering at times severely in bodily health, has never spared himself, but has laboured incessantly night and day to overcome the innumerable difficulties which have had to be encountered during the advance through a country possessing no roads."

only with me personally; I paid them up and sent them home." He said, "You were in a great hurry." I reminded him that in December 1873, when one of my Sierra Leone men had lost his eye in action, he disapproved of the Regimental Board which I had convened, and which had awarded him £5. I did not mention I had personally paid the £5, but added: "I was so afraid of your economical spirit that I have compensated Wood's Irregulars, and let them go."

Next morning Sir Garnet Wolseley spoke to me on his proposed arrangements for attacking Sekukuni. I knew what was coming, as I had seen a letter he had written to Lord Chelmsford, saying, "I mean to send Wood up, as we can trust him, to settle Sekukuni." Sir Garnet said: "Now, I know that you have had hard work, but I want you to do some more, and propose to give you an adequate Force to bring Sekukuni to terms." I replied: "I haven't had an unbroken night's rest for eight months, and am not of the same value as I was last January, and therefore do not feel justified in accepting any command for the present. If you will not let me go to England, I must go to sea for a fortnight or so, for without a rest it is impossible for me to do for you, or the Country, good service." "Well, then, how about Buller, is he fit?" "No, he has said nothing about it; but he is even more 'run down' than I am, his legs being covered with suppurating Natal sores;"—and so the Chief acquiesced in our departure, and issued the following order:—

"In notifying the Army in South Africa that Brigadier-General Wood, V.C., C.B., and Lieutenant-Colonel Buller, C.B., are about to leave Zululand for England, Sir Garnet Wolseley desires to place on record his high appreciation of the services they have rendered during the war, which their military ability and untiring energy have so largely contributed in bringing to an end. The success which has attended the operations of the Flying Column is largely due to General Wood's genius for war, to the admirable system he has established in his command, and to the zeal and energy with which his ably conceived plans have been carried out by Colonel Buller."

Sir Garnet Wolseley informed me he would urge the Commander-in-Chief to promote me to the rank of Major-

General, and did so, but the application was refused. Later he wrote from Pretoria: "I am sore at heart in not being able to address you as 'Major-General.' When will our Military Authorities learn wisdom?"

On the 18th of July I left the Flying Column, and their shout, "God speed you," made my eyes moisten. We had served together, one battalion eight months, and the other for eighteen months. Much of the time had been fraught with anxiety; the good-bye of these men, of whom it was commonly said in South Africa, "I worked their souls out," and whom I had necessarily treated with the sternest discipline, was such that I have never forgotten.

As I was leaving camp the Natives attached to the Companies of the 90th Light Infantry asked to speak to me, and their leader said: "Are you not going for a long journey?" "Yes." "How far?—For a moon?" "Oh, longer than a moon." "Well, you promised you would compensate us for the women killed by Umbiline after the battle of Kambula." "Yes, that is true; but, as I said at the time, I should not pay until I was convinced that you actually possessed the number of wives for which you have claimed, and the Landrost has not yet certified to the numbers, although I have written to him many times." Their spokesman said: "May we understand that it is you, Lakuni,[1] who will decide the point, or shall you have to refer it to Government?" "I can and will decide the point myself, for I have a large balance of cattle money forfeited by the men of Wood's Irregulars who left the Column on the night of the 28th March, after their return from the Inhlobane, and when I am satisfied of your loss I will make it good." They threw their sticks in the air, and shouted "Good-bye, we are content."

I no longer required an escort, but told the ten men who had been with me for fifteen months, had incurred more danger than any other soldiers in the Column, and had worked longer hours, that if they liked to follow me to Maritzburg they could have a week's holiday, and I would give them as good a dinner as the city could produce; and they came with me.

Colonel Buller and I rode down together through Ekowe, where we learned that we had received a step in the Order of

[1] My Zulu name.

the Bath, Buller having been made a Companion of the Bath after the operations in the Amatola Mountains. My reward was induced by a letter written by Sir Bartle Frere on the 27th of March, two days before the battle of Kambula, in which he urged on the Secretary of State for the Colonies the great value of the service performed by Colonel Pearson and myself, dilating on the political effect of our maintaining positions so far advanced in Zululand as to render invasion of Natal by the Zulu army in force an operation of extreme peril. My friend Pearson received the Companionship of the Bath. Lord Chelmsford, who had preceded me to Maritzburg, wrote me the following letter:—

"My hearty congratulations on your promotion to K.C.B.; it ought to have been given to you months ago. The Authorities have apparently woke up and realised the fact that you had not in any way been rewarded for your good work in the old Colony, and at the beginning of this war I hope they will also understand that a good deal is still due to you for Ulundi." This kind wish was not, however, fulfilled.

The inhabitants of Maritzburg entertained Lord Chelmsford at dinner, and in speaking after it he took the opportunity of again thanking me in the following words: "I never would have believed it possible for any General to receive such assistance and devotion as I have experienced from my men. . . . It would be invidious to particularise individuals and services, but when I look back eighteen months two names stand out in broad relief, the names of Wood and Buller. I can say that these two have been my Right and Left supporters during the whole of my time in the country."

I took some interest in the dinner I gave to my escort at the principal hotel. It was costly, and the variety of the liquids which my guests ordered was astonishing, for they drank beer and every sort of wine to be found in a hotel cellar. Sir Redvers Buller and I were occupying the same bedroom, the city being crowded, and when Walkinshaw, my Orderly Bugler, brought us our baths at 4 a.m. next day, Sir Redvers asked Walkinshaw, "How is your head?" "Not very well, sir." I, being interested in discipline, asked as he left the room, "I hope they all got home?" "Yes, sir." He is

an accurate and truthful man, for he put in his head and added,—"they had carts and wheelbarrows."

The Cape Town people also entertained us, and the ladies of the Colony gave me in 1880 a very handsome embossed silver shield for my services in the suppression of the Gaika outbreak, and later I received an address with a beautiful service of plate from the inhabitants of Natal.

Steaming by St. Helena and Ascension, we reached Plymouth on the 26th August, where my wife, brother, and sisters met me, and I went as soon as possible on a visit to my brother-in-law at Belhus, where my mother was staying, Sir Thomas Lennard's tenantry giving me a great reception. The village of Aveley was decorated, and the inhabitants taking out the horses pulled the carriage up to the house.

The Fishmongers' Company, of which I had become a liveryman in 1874, entertained me at dinner on the 30th September. I took the opportunity, on being asked to speak on South Africa, to try to do justice to Sir Bartle Frere, whom I termed, and after twenty-five years' experience still regard, as the greatest High Commissioner South Africa has seen; the greatest not only in his treatment of barbaric peoples, but in unflinching courage and rectitude of purpose. The trust he placed in me was the means not only of winning over some valuable allies, but of neutralising the position of many colonists of Dutch extraction, who otherwise would have swelled the number of discontented Boers who assembled at Pretoria to protest against our Government.

I spoke also of my comrades, mostly deceased, who had done so much for England, purposely making no difference between officers, non-commissioned officers, and privates who had distinguished themselves. While some newspapers unduly praised me, I was taken to task for naming anyone by a few anonymous correspondents of the daily Press. After paying this tribute of respect to the memory of those who had given up their lives while under my command in defending the interests of the country, I spoke of the Prince Imperial as follows: "In remembering those brave spirits and that gallant youth—the son of England's Ally—whose mother is our honoured guest, I am reminded of the question and

answer in Shakespeare, for humanity is the same in all ages. When Rosse said to Siward—

> 'Your son, My Lord, has paid a soldier's debt:
> He only lived but till he was a man,
> The which, no sooner had his prowess confirm'd
> In the unshrinking station where he fought,
> But like a man he died,'

the bereaved parent asked, 'Had he his hurts before?' and on being told, 'Ay, on the front,' replied—

> 'Why then, God's soldier be he,
> Had I as many sons as I have hairs,
> I would not wish them to a fairer death.'

Of the gallant Prince Imperial we may say, 'Ay, all eighteen wounds on the front.'"

CHAPTER XXXIV

1879—COMPLIMENTARY HONOURS

Honours from County of Essex — Visit to Balmoral—Cawdor Castle—Hughenden Manor—Promotion by selection disapproved—Entertained by the Bar of England—Forecast of Boer Rebellion.

I ATTENDED on the 20th of September the sale of Sir Thomas Lennard's hunters at Belhus, then an annual event of much interest in the County, and it having been stated in the papers I should be there, many of the labouring classes came to see me. An elderly woman, who had walked many miles, pushing her way through the crowd round the show-ring, asked a policeman eagerly, "Which is 'im?" She had pictured in her mind an imposing heroic figure in a splendid uniform, and on my being pointed out, a middle-sized man in plain clothes, observed in a disappointed tone as she wiped her perspiring brow: "What, 'im kill all them Zulus! Why, my old man would clout un."

On the 14th of October the County of Essex entertained me at Chelmsford, presenting me with a handsome Sword of Honour and a service of plate, and in a speech at dinner, while thanking the inhabitants of Essex, I replied to the adverse anonymous critics who had objected to my naming my comrades in previous speeches by explaining the necessity of bringing the Nation into closer touch with its private soldiers. I had long thought that with a Voluntary Army it was useless to expect the best results, unless where bravery and devotion to the interests of the country is concerned, all ranks receive consideration, and I deliberately acted upon the conviction, in spite of adverse criticism.[1]

[1] Much has since been done in this direction. The parents of soldiers wounded on service are now relieved from painful anxiety by weekly telegraphic reports.

A friend, the able editor of a newspaper, while remarking on my speeches in terms personally complimentary to me, observed: "Sir Evelyn Wood does not appear capable of perceiving the seamy side of his profession." I was too fond of my friend to answer him in print, for I feel sure that if I had written to his paper he would have put in my letter, but, as I told him privately, the occasion was not one for bringing to notice the seamy side, of which there is, doubtless, in military life more than anyone could desire, but there are also many noble aspects in such a career; for, as I remarked in speaking of the death of Ronald Campbell, Coldstream Guards, "When the noise and excitement of a war is over, the soldier who has seen men die for each other, or for Duty's sake, can never again be altogether unheroic in his life."

I received in September a command to stay at Balmoral, and left town on the evening of the 8th. I was most graciously received by Her Majesty, who honoured me with her conversation throughout dinner, and again the next night, in addition to an hour's interview each forenoon and afternoon, and then on until the 11th. My original invitation was for one night only, and when I was told on Thursday that I was expected to stop till Saturday I was much concerned, as I had promised to visit Lord Cawdor, who was naturally anxious to hear about his son, Ronald Campbell; and moreover, Sunday travelling is practically impossible in Scotland. The Equerry-in-Waiting informed me that it would not be etiquette for me to express any wish in the matter, so I approached Lady Ely, who was equally determined that she would not speak to the Queen, and explain my position. I then said, "Well, Lady Ely, then I shall," believing that the Queen, who had been so gracious, would not wish to put me to inconvenience, or disappoint Lord Cawdor. This had the desired effect, and when Her Majesty sent for me in the afternoon she opened the conversation by saying, "I believe it will not be convenient to you to remain till Saturday?" and I replied, "Most inconvenient, Your Majesty." I was greatly impressed, not only by the Queen's accurate judgment, but by her profound knowledge of details of the recent operations.

I went by Elgin to Nairn, and spent an interesting twenty-four hours with the family of my late friend. On my return

south I received the following courteous letter from Lord Beaconsfield, and I went to Hughenden on the 23rd.

"HUGHENDEN MANOR, *Sept. 15th*, 1878.

"DEAR SIR EVELYN,—The Queen wishes that I should see you, but it is not only in obedience to Her Majesty's commands, but for mine own honour and gratification, that I express a hope that your engagements may permit you to visit Hughenden on the 23rd inst., and remain there until the following Friday.—Your faithful servant,

"BEACONSFIELD."

There was a house party, those interesting me most after my host being Mr. Edward Stanhope, then known as "Young Stanhope," afterwards Secretary of State for War, and Sir Drummond Wolff. Lord Beaconsfield asked me to come and stroll with him on the terrace the morning after my arrival,—a walk which we shared with his peacocks,—and he asked me many questions about soldiers and South Africa, I endeavouring to parry his queries respecting Sir Bartle Frere. In the course of his conversation he expressed unbounded admiration for Sir Garnet Wolseley, telling me that when he embarked for South Africa he had said to him: "Now, I trust you—you trust me." Then passing on to other soldiers, he asked if I had known Colonel Home. I explained that I had lived for many weeks in a hut of leaves on the West Coast of Africa with him, and, moreover, had been associated with him at Aldershot. His Lordship said: "That man had the biggest brain of any soldier I have met." I agreed heartily, but then Lord Beaconsfield rather spoilt the value of his judgment by observing, "Why, it was Home who made me acquire Cyprus!" Home foresaw clearly that England must, for the sake of India, acquire a predominant interest in Egypt, and at one time had made a plan for building a gigantic fort in the bed of the sea, three miles outside Port Said.

The second night, after the ladies had left the dining-room, somebody remarked on the news in the evening papers that Mr. Waddington had been appointed French Ambassador at the Court of St. James, and went on to say how extraordinary it was that the French found it necessary to nominate an

Englishman to that position, appealing to Lord Beaconsfield for his opinion. His Lordship replied: "The fact is, the French have never had a native Frenchman worthy of the name of statesman." I observed gently: "My Lord, have you forgotten Colbert?" He turned to me, saying somewhat sharply: "You don't seem to be aware that Colbert was a Swiss!" I did not think it necessary to contradict my host, and a much older man, by stating the fact that, although educated in Switzerland, Colbert was born at Rheims, and submitted to the suppressing looks of my fellow guests, who chorused: "Yes, Colbert was a Swiss!" I was sitting next but one to His Lordship, and then in a low tone observed: "My Lord, how about Sully?" Sir Drummond Wolff from the end of the table called out: "What is that you are saying?" "Oh, nothing, I only made another suggestion;" but our host, drawing himself up, said in his slow, measured voice: "I now feel I made a rash and inaccurate statement. Sir Evelyn Wood challenged it, and I could not agree with him when he instanced Colbert, but he has now reminded me of Sully, who was not only a Frenchman, but a very great minister. I admit my mistake."

In the drawing-room, later in the evening, Drummond Wolff came up to me and said: "I say, how on earth did you manage to remember Sully?" "When I was small," I replied, "my parents were poor, and we had few toys, but in our nursery there was a French history book, *The Kings and Queens of France*, and I often looked at a picture of Sully standing at the door with a portfolio of papers, having surprised Henri IV., who was on his hands and knees carrying two of Gabrielle D'Estrées' children on his back."

I saw by Lord Beaconsfield's manner that if I stayed till the end of the week, as I had been invited, I should never escape a searching inquisition respecting Sir Bartle Frere's action in declaring war, so on Wednesday night I asked my host's permission to take my leave next morning. As we were going to bed, I said: "You will allow me to thank you, and say good-bye, as I am going by the earliest train." He replied: "There is no earlier train than 8.23, and as I am always up at 7 I shall have the pleasure of seeing you." As this was just what I wanted to avoid, I told the butler I would

have my breakfast at 7.30 in my bedroom, and at that hour rang, and asked why it had not been brought. He answered that it was in an ante-room, close at hand, where a fire had been lighted. I had scarcely sat down before I heard the measured step of his Lordship on the stairs, and as he came in, after greeting him, I asked him whether he had read an article in a magazine which I had open on the table. He replied somewhat shortly, "No," but he had come to talk to me about other matters, and he proceeded to put many searching questions as to Sir Bartle Frere's procedure with the Zulu nation.

We all knew in December that the Government had refused General Thesiger the reinforcements he had asked, as the Cabinet wished to avoid war, but the High Commissioner and the General were of opinion that matters had then gone too far to avoid it. Lord Beaconsfield asked me: "Will you please tell me whether, in your opinion, the war could have been postponed for six months?" "No, sir." "For three months?" "I think possibly." "For one month?" "Certainly." "Well, even a fortnight would have made all the difference to me, for at that time we were negotiating with Russia at San Stefano, and the fact of our having to send out more troops stiffened the Russian terms." "But, sir," I said, "you surely do not mean to say the sending out of four or five battalions and two cavalry regiments altered our military position in Europe?" He said: "Perhaps not,—but it did in the opinion of the Russians, who imagined we were sending an Army Corps." He then went on to say: "You are young; some day you may be abroad, and let me urge you to carry out, not only the letter of the Cabinet's orders, but also the spirit of its instructions." Two years later, after Majuba, I had to ponder often on this admonition.

On the 16th October the Military Secretary informed me that the Colonial Office had brought to the notice of the Commander-in-Chief "the very valuable Political services" I had rendered when in command of a column in Zululand. Sir Bartle Frere had brought the services of my friend Colonel Pearson also to notice, and the fact that the only result in my case was an expression of His Royal Highness's gratification, which caused him to make a note in the records of the War

Office, did not detract from the pleasure I had on reading of Pearson's being made a Knight Commander of the Order of Saint Michael and St. George.

There were many discussions amongst the Heads of the Army on the question of my promotion. His Royal Highness the Commander-in-Chief was conscientiously opposed to it, and indeed to all promotion by selection, having been a consistent advocate of advancement by seniority. He held an officer should command a battalion when he was forty, but on the other hand maintained that a Colonel should become a Major-General only by seniority. He said more than once, "Men are much of a muchness; I find officers very much on a par."[1] Lord Penzance's committee pointed out, however, that if the system advocated by the Commander-in-Chief was maintained the average of Majors-General would be sixty-four. The senior Staff officers appointed by him naturally reflected his views. There was, however, a Colonel of very decided opinions then in the office, for whom the Adjutant-General sent, and asked: "Would you object to Evelyn Wood being put over your head?" He replied: "Do you consider he would make a good general?" "Yes, his reports are good." "Then, sir, I think you should promote him; and having said that, may I further add I do not think you have any right to ask my opinion."

Sir Garnet Wolseley did his utmost to get me promoted on Public grounds. In addressing the Commander-in-Chief from South Africa, on the 18th July,[2] he wrote: "I earnestly hope that Your Royal Highness will be enabled to recommend Colonel Wood to Her Majesty for the permanent rank of Major-General, not as a reward for what he has done, but in the interests of the Queen's Army, and of the State." The Chief, ignoring the Public grounds question, replied: "Evelyn Wood I know as an excellent man. . . . I have my doubts, however, whether Wood has not received his full reward with a K.C.B. and a Good Service Pension." The Commander-in-

[1] Lord Penzance's Royal Commission on Army Promotion. August 1876.

[2] *Military Life of H.R.H. Duke of Cambridge*, by Colonel Willoughby Verner, page 62: "I intend to send Brigadier Wood, he being the best Commander of those in South Africa. His name is in every one's mouth, from Bugler up through all Ranks, as the man of the War . . ."

Chief was misinformed as to the rewards he mentioned. He had given me the Good Service Pension in March 1879, on General Thesiger's strong remonstrance that I was the only officer unrewarded for the Gaika War, and the K.C.B. was given for my services in Northern Zululand, before the battle of Kambula.[1]

On the 1st November the Bar of England gave me a dinner in the Middle Temple Hall, the first, I believe, to a soldier, unless we consider Drake belonged to both Services, at which the Lord Chancellor paid me a gracious compliment: "The law is silent in the midst of Arms, yet, as we see to-night, the lawyer and soldier combined can, after Arms have been laid aside, speak with the eloquence which befits the one and the vigour which characterises the other."

Early in December 1879 my mother's health gave us cause for anxiety, and on the 13th of that month my sister, Lady Leonard, in whose house she was staying, said: "I am afraid that you are feeling very ill." "Yes, very ill!" "Would you like us to telegraph for Evelyn to come and see you?" "Yes, please do so." As my sister was leaving the room, mother called her back, and asked: "What time is it?" "About six." "Then please write on the telegram, 'Not to be delivered till 11.15 p.m.'" "Why?" my sister asked. "Because he is giving an important dinner party at his Club, and if the telegram goes now he will leave the table, and it will spoil the party." I was, in fact, entertaining the Attorney-General Sir John Holker, and some friends who had thrown themselves warmly into the dinner given to me by the Bar. At 11.15 the telegram was placed in my hands as I was saying good-night to my guests. My brother was with me, and we left by a luggage train at 2 a.m., reaching Belhus early on Sunday. My mother spoke to me about ten o'clock that night quite rationally, asking about the dinner party, and died at five o'clock next morning, so painlessly that I was unable to credit the fact that she had passed away.

[1] See page 85, and

Despatch from Lieutenant-General Thesiger to the Secretary of State for War:—

"KING WILLIAM'S TOWN, *June 26th*, 1878.

"I am of opinion that his (Colonel Evelyn Wood) indefatigable exertions and personal influence have been mainly instrumental in bringing the war to a speedy close."

Her last act of unselfishness was only similar to her conduct throughout her life. There are few men, I suppose, who remain in quite as close touch with mother and sisters when they marry as they were while bachelors; but in my case, with the mother, as with two sisters, my marriage only brought one more into the circle of devoted relations.

I assumed command of the Belfast District on the 22nd of December, and to this day am ignorant why I was sent there, as the Commander-in-Chief had given me on the 29th of October the command of the Chatham District, which I took over on the 12th of January 1880, from General (now Sir) Edward Bulwer, brother of Sir Henry Bulwer, who was Governor of Natal in 1879. My only difference of opinion with the General was as to the terms on which I purchased horses, furniture, *et cetera*, concerning which he showed much more consideration for me than for his own pecuniary interests.

When Her Imperial Majesty the Empress Eugénie read in the newspapers the account of the Fishmongers' banquet on the 30th of September, and the allusion to her noble son beautifully expressed in Shakespeare's language, she sent for me, and, after several prolonged interviews, I was commanded to Windsor, where Her Majesty was graciously pleased to honour me with the charge of the Empress on a journey she was undertaking to the spot where her gallant son perished. The Queen enjoined on me the greatest care for the safety of her Sister, and I replied I could only accept full responsibility if H.I.M. the Empress would follow my instructions as if she were a soldier in my command. This was arranged, and on the 25th of March the Empress sailed from Southampton for Cape Town and Durban.

Her Imperial Majesty had sent me a cheque for £5000, desiring me to purchase everything required, and to defray all charges. I handed back on our return to the Empress' Secretary £3600. I was allowed to take my Aide-de-Camp, Captain Arthur Bigge,[1] and Lieutenant Slade[2] as an extra Aide-de-Camp. Both these officers had distinguished themselves by the courage with which they fought their guns in

[1] Now Colonel Sir Arthur Bigge, K.C.B., K.C.S.I.
[2] Now General Slade, C.B., Royal Artillery.

the open at Kambula twelve months earlier. The Marquis de Bassano, Lady Wood, and the Honourable Mrs. Ronald Campbell, the widow of my Staff officer and friend who fell leading so determinedly at the Inhlobane, Dr. Scott of the Army Medical Department, two maids in the service of the Empress, Walkinshaw, my bugler, who had served with me in 1878 and 1879, and a complete establishment of servants, made up the party.

When we reached Cape Town, I had communications from well-educated acquaintances in the old Colony and Natal, loyal to our Government from conviction and personal interest. I wrote to my uncle on the 20th April, after an interview with a Dutch gentleman: "From what this gentleman told me, and from what I learn from other sources, it is clear to me that affairs in South Africa are in a very unsatisfactory state. Joubert and Kruger are now in this Colony agitating amongst the Colony Boers for the restoration of the Transvaal. There are many members of the Cape House whose seats depend on the vote, and thus pressure is brought on the Ministry here. I do not suppose we shall restore the Transvaal: if we do, we shall be obliged to re-annex it in ten years, for the sake of both Whites and Blacks. If it is not to be restored, the cause of order and progress will be greatly strengthened by the Imperial Ministers saying, 'We cannot restore the Tranvaal.'" I suggested he should tell some of his friends in the Cabinet what I had learnt. He had long before resigned his seat on the Woolsack, owing to failing vision, but was on intimate terms with his former colleagues.

CHAPTER XXXV

1880—H.I.M. THE EMPRESS EUGENIE

Cetewayo in captivity—Boers welcome me in Utrecht—Value of a Zulu wife—The Inhlobane—Ityatosi—How Cetewayo killed Masipula—How the Prince Imperial fought 18 Zulus.

WHILE we were at Cape Town I paid Cetewayo two visits, and sat with him for some time. He expressed great pleasure, and, unless he was a good actor, felt such at seeing me. He was a man of considerable tact, for he had taken the trouble to procure a photograph of myself. He discussed the merits of his chiefs in the course of conversation, and said it was quite correct that he had ordered Faku to drive the settlers away from Luneberg. As he put it humorously, "I said they were to go away lest they should be hurt." He told me many interesting stories of my proceedings in Zululand, and mentioned that he was always nervous lest I should make a raid with the mounted men and carry him off to Ulundi, thus confirming the information obtained by Sir Bartle Frere.[1] The ex-monarch asked me for a rug; and so appropriating a thick handsome one belonging to my wife, I sent it when we got back to Government House, where the Empress was staying. But Cetewayo returned it with a message that it was not nearly big enough to cover his body, and with some difficulty I found one which gave him satisfaction.

We left Maritzburg on Thursday the 29th of April, with waggons, cooks, servants, waggon drivers, and mules. The party consisting of eighty persons.

H.I.M. the Empress had proposed, in the first instance, to ride throughout her journey, but foreseeing that this might

[1] See vol. ii. p. 32.

be inconvenient I had purchased a "Spider," and after our first day's journey, finding it too heavy for a pair, in spite of the predictions of the oldest inhabitants, that it was impossible to drive four horses from such a low seat, I drove the Empress or one of the other ladies 800 miles before we re-embarked.

They greatly enjoyed the scenery in the Tugela Valley. The camp was pitched one day on a slope overlooking a ravine, 150 feet below the tents. Up to Helpmakaar, the track is carried through a beautiful though rugged country, and on the 5th May we mounted 650 feet in 5 miles, and descended 1800 feet in the next 5, travelling on an unfenced road, scarped out of the mountain-side.

When we reached Utrecht the whole of the population turned out to see me, and from the moment we crossed the Blood River I had a succession of Black visitors, including 10 men enlisted in October 1878, who had been attached to Companies of my Battalion, and who had lost wives killed in the raid made by Umbilini after the battle of Kambula. They were the men who had thrown their knobkerries in the air when they learned I was to decide, and pay the amount they claimed for their wives. In every case the claim was certified by Mr. Rudolph, the Landdrost, as correct, and I handed over cheques amounting to between eight and nine hundred pounds, which I told them would be honoured at Newcastle. They saluted according to their fashion, and walked off without the slightest doubt of their getting gold for the pieces of paper tied up in the corner of their blankets.

When the last of them had departed, one man came forward and said, "Will you do something for me?" "Oh! but you are not one of the men whose wives I insured?" "No; but I was in Wood's Regiment, and my wife was killed." "When was that?" "In August." "But then you could not have gone straight home when I dismissed you in the middle of July near Kwamagasa?" "No; it is true I stayed for some little time with relatives in Sirayo's country, and the raid took place while I was there." "That is, you contributed to your own loss?" "Yes; I have no claim, but perhaps, as my wife was killed, you will do something for me?" "How

long had you had her?" "Five years." "What did you give for her?" "Ten cows."[1] "That is a good deal." "Well, it was the current price when I married her." "Wives will be cheaper now, for we have killed a good many men, and no women. Had you any children?" "Two." "Boys or girls?" "Girls." "Were they killed?" "No." "Then they are worth a calf a piece?" "That is so." "What sort of value was your wife?" "Excellent; she could hoe well." "Well, for the sake of calculation, if you have had her five years she could not be as good as she was when you got her, and eight cows was the outside value when you married her, according to the current rate at this time; so if we take off one cow for the two girls you have still got, and two cows for wear and tear, if you get the price of five cows you will be fully compensated?" "Yes; I shall be perfectly content." I satisfied myself that his loss was correctly stated, and then having prize money which was somewhat of a white elephant to me, I eventually gave him £24, with which he departed expressing deep gratitude.

While we were encamped on the Blood River the whole of the Uys family came to see me, as did also Sirayo and his two sons. They accompanied us to Kambula, and on the 16th the Empress, standing in a little redoubt on the hill, was able to see not only where Lieutenants Bigge and Slade had fought their guns in the open for four hours, but also where the Ngobamakosi Regiment, of which Melokazulu was a mounted officer, attempted to come out of the ravine, to storm the laager. We had taken up a tombstone for the graves near the camp, and on the 21st, in Mrs. Campbell's presence, I had the tombstone to Ronald Campbell carried up the Inhlobane by men who were fighting against him when he lost his life on the 28th of March.

The Empress rode and walked up the eastern end of the mountain where Colonel Buller ascended and descended by the Devil's Pass, at the foot of which he gained his Victoria Cross. The ruggedness and steepness of the descent may be gathered by the fact that I had all 14 ponies belonging to the party driven slowly, and allowed to pick their path down, and the only one which accomplished the descent

[1] A cow is equal to £3, and a calf 30s.

without a heavy, fall was my own pony, which I led, and indicated to him where he should put his feet.

While we were near the Inhlobane I rode many miles to the eastward and to the north of the mountain searching for the body of my friend Robert Barton, but was no more successful than were the 25 natives whom I employed for three weeks for the same purpose. Uhamu came to visit me at Tinta's Kraal. He naturally did not tell me, but I learned from others, that both he and Mnyamane, who were the most powerful chiefs, were oppressing their lesser brethren. Mnyamane had then taken 400 cattle from Sirayo, and 600 from his people, on the ground that it was his fault the Zulu dynasty had been destroyed.

We had arranged that the Empress should reach the Ityatosi some days before the sad anniversary, the death of her only son, June the 1st. When we arrived there we were troubled by the intrusive action of a lady correspondent of an American newspaper, who endeavoured with much persistence to obtain "copy" for her paper. I sent for the head man of the kraal,—and it is remarkable how the natives trust any Englishman whom they know,—and after an explanation of the case, he signed a witnessed deed of a lease of all his land on a radius of 2 miles from the spot where the Prince fell. We explained the law of trespass, and after giving the Zulus some blankets they formed a long line, and clasping hands danced away, showing how they would resist passively the approach of any one who endeavoured to go on the property.

I have already described, by Chicheeli's help, how he killed Robert Barton. We were able to give the remains a Christian burial. When we arrived at the Ityatosi I sent out for all the men who had been engaged in the attack on the reconnoitring party when the Prince lost his life, and while waiting for them to assemble, Lieutenant Bigge and I rode to the Inhlazatze Mountain, with the double purpose of returning Mr. Osborne's call, who had waited on the Empress when she entered Zululand by crossing the Blood River, and also because I wanted to confer with him about the lease I had taken of the land around Sobuza's kraal, the spot where the Prince was killed. Leaving at 1 a.m. we were able to

spend several hours with Mr. Osborne, and got back in time for dinner, the ponies doing the 74 miles without any sign of distress.

I had long wanted to know the truth of the story of the death of Masipula. When we were marching on Ulundi the previous year I was out in advance of the column reconnoitring, and when sitting under a tree the interpreter said, "The last time I was under this tree I said good-bye to Masipula, Umpande's Prime Minister;" and he told me this story. During the later years of Umpande's long reign the position in Zululand was somewhat analogous to that in the days of our Regency, when George the Third was no longer capable of managing the affairs of the nation. Masipula felt it his duty to check Cetewayo continually in his desire of raising more regiments, and when the king died, Cetewayo delayed until he was crowned by Shepstone, and then sent a message to Masipula, "The King is dead." The meaning of this intelligence thus formally delivered was, "As you were his minister so many years, you ought to die." Masipula not accepting the hint, sent back a message that he greatly regretted Umpande's death; and Cetewayo waited patiently for another three months, and finding that Masipula would not take the hint, sent for him. He told my informant he knew that Cetewayo would kill him, and the Englishman asked, "Then why go? Ride over the border into Natal, and live there." The old chief drawing himself up proudly, observed, "And do you think that, after being his father's minister so long, I would refuse to obey the son's orders?"

I asked Mr. Osborne, "Can you tell me whether Cetewayo poisoned or strangled Masipula? for I have heard that he had his beer poisoned, and another story that, after receiving him, in the evening he sent men into the kraal assigned to him, and that when the executioners entered, Masipula placed his head in the noose which was already in the rope. Tell me if you can, was he poisoned, or strangled?" Mr. Osborne was a cautious man, and his solitary life among the Zulus perhaps increased this habit, although within 40 miles of us not any one except Captain Bigge and our orderlies could speak English, he dropped his voice, and in a low tone answered me in a monosyllable, "Both"; and added, the poison not having taken

effect as quickly as was expected, the ex-Prime Minister was strangled.

While we were encamped on the Ityatosi, near Seobuza's kraal, I had prolonged interviews with 18 Zulus, whom I examined separately, and from them obtained a detailed account of the surprise of the reconnoitring party of the 1st June in the previous year, in which the Prince Imperial fell, the natives later putting themselves in the exact positions they held that afternoon. There were between 30 and 36 Zulus who took part in the attack.

The Patrol having rested on a hill to the north of the river, descended at three o'clock to Seobuza's kraal, and the Zulu scouts who were watching it hastily assembled all the men within reach. These crept up the bed of the river, and were close at hand concealed in a mealie field, when a friendly Zulu, who was acting as guide, and was killed a few minutes later, informed the British officer in command that he had seen Zulus near, and then it was that the party was ordered to mount. The Zulus purposely waited until this moment, realising that it would be the most favourable moment to attack, and fired a volley. The horse of one of the white escort was shot, and he was immediately assegaied. That of another soldier fell in an ant-bear hole, and the rider was stabbed before he could rise. The rest of the party, except the Prince, galloped hard to the ridge, not drawing rein until they reached some rocks 820 yards from the kraal, when one of them looked round, and they then rode away, still fast, but not at the headlong speed at which they had started. The Zulus in pursuit ran first after the two white soldiers who were on the flanks, three or four men, headed by Zabanga, following the Prince. His horse had jumped just as he was mounting, and his sword fell out of the scabbard. He was very active, and was vaulting on his horse in motion, when the wallet on the front of the saddle broke away, and he fell to the ground, being at this time only 60 yards behind the fugitives. There were seven men who actually fought the Prince. When Langalabalele, pursuing the fugitives, first saw Zabanga[1] he was running away from the Prince, who was rushing at him. Zabanga, crouching in the grass, threw an assegai at him. The

[1] Killed at Ulundi, 4th July 1879.

first assegai stuck in the Prince's thigh, and withdrawing it from the wound, he kept his foes at bay for some minutes. In the native's words, "He fought like a lion; he fired two shots, but without effect, and I threw an assegai at him, which struck him, as I said at the time, but I always allowed Zabanga's claim to have killed him, for his assegai hit the Prince in the left shoulder, a mortal wound. He fought with my assegai, and we did not dare to close with him until he sank down facing us, when we rushed on him."

On the 1st of July I drove the Empress and Lady Wood from Maritzburg to the foot of the Inchanga Mountain, where at the terminus of the railway a train was waiting. The road was engineered down the side of the mountain, and the Empress liking to travel fast, I let the horses canter most of the way down. I was always nervous when driving Her Majesty, and when I handed my wife into the train, I said, "Now my personal responsibility is over I shall not mind if the train goes off the line." We had indeed a narrow escape; when I had assisted the ladies out of the carriage I handed the reins to a Sergeant of the Army Service Corps, who was waiting to take the team back. He had gone only half a mile at a steady trot when the connecting rod which fastens the fore-carriage to the after part of the "Spider" snapped in two. If this had happened half an hour earlier, when we were cantering down the mountain road, the Empress and Lady Wood would have had a severe accident.

After giving a personal report of the journey to Her Majesty, for which purpose Lady Wood and I received a command to Osborne, I resumed my work at Chatham.[1]

This gave much interesting occupation, and an opportunity I had long desired of reducing the number of useless sentries who wasted their time in many places in the garrison.

The Commissary-General at the War Office corresponded with me at this period, and later, on the question of my succeeding him, which he desired. I had been successful in providing food and transport in 1878–79, and now, being anxious for the efficiency of his Department, in the absence of

[1] The War Minister, apprehensive of criticism in the House of Commons, declined to allow me to draw any, even half-pay as a Colonel, for the six months I was absent from the Command.

any specially qualified officer in it, he wished that I should succeed him. He proposed this to me on several occasions, once when writing with reference to the confidential reports I had furnished on officers who had served under me during the Zulu War, concerning which he wrote: "I take this opportunity of stating, with reference to the reports you have sent me, that no more faithful or honest descriptions of officers' characters have ever reached me."

CHAPTER XXXVI

1881—THE LAND OF MISUNDERSTANDINGS

Preliminaries to Rebellion—Modelled on Hampden's conduct—To South Africa—Dutchmen from Cape Colony deprecate resistance to Government—Death of Sir George Colley—An appreciation.

SOUTH AFRICA, sometimes named "The land of Misfortune," may be more aptly termed "The land of Misunderstandings." The problem of ensuring good government in a vast country inhabited by a few dominant white men, in the midst of warlike native races, has always been difficult.

Many Governors and Generals have been recalled by a dissatisfied Home Government, mainly because it did not understand the local conditions of the country, and twenty-five years ago the solution of the Zulu question, instead of solving the Boer-British difficulties, brought their opposing interests into sharper antagonism.

In 1880, before the gold industry had been developed, Mr. Kruger and his friends worked against Confederation, mainly, I believe, from the wish, after regaining their independence, to be left alone. The successes of 1881, and the accumulation of vast wealth from gold mines turning the farmer's head, encouraged him later to strive for the mastery in South Africa.

The proclamation annexing the Transvaal, in 1877, promised as much Self-government as the circumstances of the country permitted. Sir Bartle Frere confirmed this pledge, and the Boers hoped on for its fulfilment, though the nominated Assembly of officers, and other Britons, in November 1879, in nowise satisfied their aspirations.

The answer brought back by the Deputation to the Colonial Minister in London showed the Boers they had little to hope for by peaceful measures; but, as Kruger and Joubert told me

in May 1881, the step which eventually determined their resort to arms was the perusal of a despatch from the Administrator, published in *The Times*, arguing with perfect honesty of purpose, the people must be contented, since taxes had never been so satisfactorily collected. "These English cannot understand our love of freedom," they said, and the prearranged refusal to pay taxes by Bezeidenhout, at Potchefstroom, for which he was indemnified in advance, was the first overt act of rebellion, following the precedents of Eliot, Hampden, and Pym in the early Parliaments of Charles I.

The British Authorities, determined to strengthen Pretoria, called in two-thirds of the Lydenburg garrison. The Boers waylaying it on the 20th December, demanded it should retrace its steps. The Senior officer refused to do so, and was extending for action when the Boers opened fire from cover, destroyed or captured the detachment.

Major-General Sir George Colley had succeeded Sir Garnet Wolseley as High Commissioner for East South Africa, but had been requested to regard his authority in the Transvaal as dormant, to be exercised only in case of necessity.

Unfortunately Sir Bartle Frere, the strongest Governor South Africa has ever seen, was no longer at Cape Town. First the Conservatives, later the Liberals, had retained him as the keystone of the much-desired Confederation. He had left Cape Town in September 1880, and his successor, Sir Hercules Robinson, only arrived at the end of January 1881. On the 25th December the Acting Governor in Cape Town cabled a resolution of the Cape Legislature, urging Lord Kimberley to send a special Commissioner to the Transvaal to avert hostilities. Lord Kimberley replied on the 30th December that "the moment was not opportune."

Throughout January 1881 Mr. Brand strove strenuously for concessions to the Boers, telegraphing on the 10th and 12th to Lord Kimberley, and many messages passed between Brand and some of the British Authorities in South Africa.

On the 23rd January, General and High Commissioner Sir George Colley wrote to Mr. Joubert calling on him to dismiss his followers, and undertaking to submit any representations the Boers might wish to put forward. Although the hostile camps were within 4 miles, Joubert's refusal to disperse unless

Annexation was cancelled, dated 27th January, was not received until 15th February. On the 28th January, Colley attacked Joubert in position on Lang's Nek, in Natal, and was repulsed.

On the 28th January, Lord Kimberley telegraphed to Mr. Brand, through the Free State British Consul, "Inform President, that if armed opposition ceases forthwith Her Majesty's Government will thereupon endeavour to form such scheme as they believe would satisfy all enlightened friends of the Transvaal community."

On the 3rd February, in telegrams passing between Mr. Brand and Sir George Colley, he learnt of Lord Kimberley's message to Brand of the 26th January, and, asking Sir Hercules Robinson, received a copy of it, and next day begged Mr. Brand "to give every publicity to it."

On the 5th February, Mr. Joubert wrote to Sir George Colley protesting against the attack of the 28th January, made before he had had time to reply to Sir George's letter of the 23rd; but Joubert, at the same time using the Free State Territory, sent troops round the British flank, and stopped the post on the 7th February, on the Ingogo River, 7 miles south of Colley's camp at Mount Prospect. The General tried to reopen the Newcastle road next day with 5 companies and 2 guns; was heavily attacked; retained his position until sunset, when the Boers drew off, and after dark Sir George Colley fell back on Prospect Camp. Although the Boers held the ground next morning for a short time, the engagement reopened the communication a few days later.

On the 4th January I received a note from the Military Secretary asking me in the name of the Commander-in-Chief if I would return to South Africa to serve under Sir George Colley, to whom I was one senior in the Army List, and requesting me to go to London to discuss the question. I agreed to go out on the Adjutant-General's observing, "Your Rank, Pay, and Allowances will be the same as at Chatham."

In a "Letter of Service" received on the 6th, it was stated that I was going out as a "Colonel on the Staff." This I declined by telegraph, recalling the previous day's conversation, and was again ordered to the War Office. Though the Adjutant-General predicted I should repent it, I maintained

my decision. In the result a fresh "Letter of Service" was handed to me, with the rank of Brigadier-General, which I had held at Chatham, and also when I left the Colony eighteen months earlier, after having commanded in two campaigns and five fights a strong brigade of all Arms.

Lord Kimberley sent for me and explained his views of the question of the Zulu and Swazi States after the Annexation should be annulled, which he gave me to understand he already accepted in principle. I took leave of Her Majesty the Queen, who was very gracious to me, on the 7th January, and sailed on the 14th, reaching Cape Town on the 7th February.

We heard on the 8th, at Cape Town, of the action on the Ingogo; and the mail steamer being delayed, I transhipped into a transport, reaching Durban on the afternoon of the 9th. I left immediately, arriving at Government House early next morning, where I was kindly received by Lady Colley, with whom I had danced at her first ball. I found a letter from Sir George Colley, dated the 4th February, couched in graceful terms, as follows:—"I was right glad to hear you were coming out, and thought it very generous of you to be ready to serve under a junior and less experienced officer. I propose to give you half the troops, to relieve Lydenburg."

The situation had changed since he wrote, and so I left Maritzburg in the evening, sleeping a few hours at Estcourt, as the tracks were heavy and the mules had much difficulty in pulling the cart. I stopped on the 14th at Ladysmith, after travelling from daylight till 9 p.m. for two hours, to clear up some work about which the Colonial Secretary had telegraphed to me, and then drove on through the night, arriving at the Biggarsberg at daylight, where I received a letter from Sir George Colley, dated Mount Prospect, 16th February. He had heard I was coming up, and warned that a Force was on my left, estimated to be from eight to fifteen hundred men, adding he did not know the position it was supposed they intended to hold.

I found on the Biggarsberg two infantry Battalions, and two Squadrons of Cavalry, but the Senior officer had taken no military precautions. Having ascended the top of the mountain, and assured myself there was no enemy in the

immediate neighbourhood, I left orders for the troops to march after an early dinner, and went out at nine o'clock with a small escort of 15th Hussars, to reconnoitre. I could see no signs of the Boers on our side of the Drakensberg Mountain,[1] and turned eastwards in the afternoon, arriving on the Biggarsberg-Newcastle track at sunset.

I approached the rise overlooking the Ingagane River, cautiously as a matter of habit, and it was well I did so, for just below me there was a party of 200 Boers pillaging a public-house on the north bank. They had cleared the building, destroying all the liquor, and were leaving. As they never looked back, I was able to ford the river and follow them until it was clear where they intended to cross the Drakensberg into the Free State. None but the leaders knew why Joubert declined to attack us.

When I returned late to the camp I sent for the Commanding officers, and told them that I had seen a Boer Patrol; and while I had no reason to suppose that a large body was close at hand, yet even a small number of mounted men might hold the Ingagane position and render our crossing difficult. They had made one march, so I asked if they would prefer to make a night march to get to the bank, and cross with the first streak of dawn, or wait and take the chance of the Boers occupying it. They unanimously preferred to march, as we did at 1 a.m.

We began to cross at daylight, but the water had risen since the previous evening, and as single men could not resist the current, we were obliged to form a chain to ensure getting them over in safety. We moved on to the Horn River, 7 miles, and the difficulties of the track may be understood from the fact that our last waggon did not get into camp until 10 p.m., the oxen being on the trek-tow[2] twenty hours.

Next morning, preceding the troops, I went early to Newcastle, and had the pleasure of meeting Sir George Colley, who had ridden through the previous night from Prospect Camp. I told him Lord Kimberley's views on the steps to be taken after the Annexation was annulled, and Sir George protested

[1] They had broken up their laager at Leo Kop that morning.

[2] Rope by which oxen pull a waggon.

in a telegram dated the 19th February, against any division of the country.

On the 8th February, Lord Kimberley had telegraphed to Sir George Colley, "If the Boers cease from armed opposition, Her Majesty's Government will be ready to give all reasonable guarantees as to their treatment after submission, and that scheme will be framed with a view to permanent friendly settlement of difficulties."

On the 13th February, Sir George telegraphed the purport of a letter from Mr. Kruger asking for a Royal Commission, which he was confident would give Boers their rights, adding, if Annexation were upheld they would fight to the end. On the 16th, Lord Kimberley, understanding Colley was shut up in Prospect Camp, telegraphed to me, "Inform Kruger that if Boers will desist from armed opposition, we shall be quite ready to appoint Commissioners with extensive powers, and who may develop scheme referred to in my telegram of 8th inst. And that if this proposal is accepted you are authorised to agree to suspension of hostilities on our part."

I had not answered this telegram, hoping to hand it to Sir George, which I did on the 19th February. Sir George replied that day to Lord Kimberley, "Latter part of your telegram to Wood not understood. There can be no hostilities if no resistance is made; but am I to leave Lang's Nek, in Natal territory, in Boer occupation, and our garrisons isolated, and short of provisions, or occupy former, and relieve latter?"

Lord Kimberley replied the same day,—"It is essential that garrisons should be free to provision themselves and peaceful intercourse allowed, but we do not mean that you should march to the relief of garrison or occupy Lang's Nek, if arrangement proceeds. Fix reasonable time within which answer must be sent by Boers."

I ascertained, in the course of conversation, that Sir George had no information of the Left Flank and Rear of the Boer position, and suggested that I should go as far as was necessary to see if there were any considerable number of troops in the Wakkerstroom district.

He demurred somewhat to the risk, but eventually, after proposing to come himself, to which I objected on the principle that two valuable eggs should not go in one basket,

allowed me to proceed; and at 11 p.m. on the 19th, I left Newcastle, and crossing the Buffalo with 100 Hussars, we proceeded to a hill overlooking Wakkerstroom, and ascertained there was no large Force of the enemy in that direction.

When I returned next evening, after a ride of 60 miles, Sir George told me he wished me to go back to Maritzburg and expedite the transport of provisions, of which there were at Newcastle only thirteen days' supply. I received two telegrams in succession from Dutchmen living near Fort Beaufort, who had served with me in 1878, requesting me to transmit to the Boer leaders then on the Nek, the opinion of the Fort Beaufort district Dutchmen that they ought to submit, when no doubt they would get all they wanted from the British Government. I sent the telegram to Sir George Colley with a note saying I was anxious to assist him, and not engage in any correspondence myself with the Boer leaders. He thanked me warmly, saying he fully appreciated my loyal desire to help him, and mentioned that he thought it was best to let Mr. Brand deal with all such communications. I left Newcastle at 3 a.m. on the 22nd, but was detained several hours on the Ingagane, as the change of mules had strayed and ours were too exhausted to do a double stage; but later, we were fortunate in the weather, and next day, by driving from 3 a.m. to 7 p.m., got to Maritzburg.

During the night, 26th to 27th, Sir George Colley occupied the Majuba Mountain, thinking the Boers intrenching its lower slopes were about to forestall him on the summit. I heard from him at breakfast-time; he was on the mountain; but in the afternoon we had an alarming telegram, followed by a succession of similar messages; one announcing Sir George's death, urged that unless the 15th Hussars and an Infantry Battalion moved up to Prospect at once, the camp there would be in a critical position. I recalled the troops who had already started, for the effect of their move would have been to leave the ammunition, and the twelve days' supplies at Newcastle, with 250 sick and wounded, guarded by 100 men, in order to put 700 more men into Prospect Camp, where there were already 1200 soldiers, and would also have

added a march of 17 miles and one more difficult river, through which the supplies would have to be dragged.

At 8 p.m. I asked the Chief Justice to come to Government House, and was sworn in as Acting Governor of Natal and Administrator of the Transvaal. I could not rest, as telegrams were brought to me every half-hour, but managed to get away at 5.30 a.m. on the 28th. Though we started before daylight, the track was so greasy that it was dark before we reached Estcourt, only 50 miles away. There I received a fresh bundle of telegrams, which kept me up till midnight, and Walkinshaw called me again before 4 a.m. That night we slept at the Biggarsberg, and as an officer there had telegraphed to me that a Dutchman had been watching for the post cart, asking if I was on it, I took on an escort of six men. I saw no Boers, however; and as the team could not pull the cart, I rode the horses of the escort in turn, to Newcastle, where I arrived on the 3rd March. Next day I visited Prospect in a deluge of rain, which made the track so greasy that the horses could with difficulty keep on their feet at a walk; and on the 6th, when I again rode up, it took us five hours to travel about 20 miles.

I wrote to my wife, "Colley is gone: the best instructed soldier I ever met." In 1877 I wished him to take the Staff College, when I thought it was to be offered to me, solely because I thought he would make a better Commandant.[1] Except by Lord Wolseley, and one or two others, Sir George's long and valuable life is unappreciated, and forgotten in its culminating and dramatic disaster. For him success was impossible, no smaller mind would have attempted to achieve it with the totally inadequate means at hand. He did not know what it was to fear, and rated others by his own undaunted heart. He had suddenly to face a rebellion carefully prepared in a vast country, which he was to rule only in case of emergency, and until the end of November; when the Administrator of the Transvaal telegraphed for troops, all that officer's reports had been reassuring.

Colley was justified, in a military sense, in moving on the 26th. The hill he occupied is in Natal. The forty-eight hours, to which his letter of the 21st had limited his offer

[1] *Vide* vol. i. p. 294.

"to suspend hostilities," had long since elapsed; and, moreover, as he telegraphed on the 10th to Mr. Brand, he could not "allow any communication with the Boers to affect his military operations" while they were trying to starve out the British garrisons.

CHAPTER XXXVII

1881—AFTER MAJUBA

The Military situation compels inaction—Ambiguous telegrams from the Cabinet—Piet Joubert asks me to meet him—Lord Kimberley approves of my doing so—His instructions—I urge Military action—Walkinshaw's endurance—The Boers disperse—Boer flag at Heidelberg—Pretoria—A painful journey.

THE following was the Military position of the frontier when I arrived at Newcastle: at Prospect there were 1200 Infantry and a few Mounted Infantry. All the troops had been engaged once; about two-thirds, twice, and all three engagements had ended in a withdrawal of the British troops. In the camp at Prospect there were six weeks' rations for men, and at Newcastle twelve days', with six days' forage. Although we were so short of forage, no horses had been allowed to graze for two days, for fear of a raid by the Boers, still over 25 miles distant. I found of two and a half Squadrons of Cavalry, one Squadron was kept continuously on outpost duty. These I withdrew, replacing them by six scouts, only farther out than the Squadron had gone.

Rain had fallen for ten successive days, and on one occasion for twenty hours without ceasing, causing the Incandu River at Newcastle to rise 7 feet in one day.

The Colonial Secretary urged me to bring the troops back to Newcastle, and asked to have the Natal Police moved back to Colenso. The Inniskilling Dragoons, a battery and a half Royal Artillery, and the 83rd Regiment were marching up country, but did not arrive till twenty-three days later, when, although the Dragoons led their horses all the way, they had only a hundred of them fit for work, in spite of the fact that they had taken eighteen days to cover 140 miles. The tracks, called roads, in Natal were indeed almost impassable, but by

leaving their waggons the troops could have arrived a week earlier.

There was no necessity for an immediate advance, except as regards Potchefstroom. Sir George Colley had been very anxious for that Garrison. He wrote on the 15th January: "Unless I can in some way relieve the pressure on Potchefstroom before the middle of next month, that Garrison and its guns must fall into the Boers' hands," and this anxiety induced his movement on the 28th January. Although he had not the power to ensure success, he kept the Boer forces occupied, and it should be remembered to his credit that none of the garrisons fell.

I received simultaneously the two following telegrams:

"SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR TO SIR EVELYN WOOD, BRIGADIER-GENERAL.

"*1st March* 1881.

"Although Sir F. Roberts is going out with large reinforcements, we place full confidence in you, and do not desire to fetter your military discretion."

"LORD KIMBERLEY TO SIR EVELYN WOOD.

"*1st March.*

"When did Sir George Colley communicate to Kruger the fact that the British Government would appoint Commissioners with extensive powers for the friendly settlement of all difficulties, and what answer was given?"

And on the 3rd March, Lord Kimberley ordered me to inquire whether an answer would be sent to me; and again, on the 4th March, asked for a reply.

Most of the Ministry, possibly, but certainly a majority of the Nation, would have been better satisfied if I could have consulted my own wishes, and driven the Boers from the Nek before the Transvaal was given back. With the troops then at hand, however, success against a well-posted enemy, four times as strong, was unattainable. Before the reinforcements arrived the dominant will of the Premier decided the question.[1]

[1] I had thought much during the weary hours spent on the post-cart between Maritzburg and Newcastle of the Military Situation, and of the Duke of Wellington's

On the 3rd March, Mr. Brand telegraphed to me, stating he had written to Kruger to urge him to suspend hostilities, and begged me, as one formerly on friendly terms with some of the Boers, to contribute to a peaceable settlement. I replied thanking Mr. Brand, and endorsing his sentiments for our Boer friends, said I would gladly abstain from a forward movement till the 10th March, if the Boers made a similar promise.

I telegraphed Brand's message and my reply to Lord Kimberley, and he next day replied approving my message. When sending a copy of my telegram I added, "Referring to the above, please consider with this my telegram to Brand. I

views expressed in his letter to Viscount Castlereagh, dated the 1st of August 1808. ". . . You may depend, I shall not hurry the operations, or commence them one moment sooner than they may be commenced, in order that I may acquire the credit of success." And again, a year later, in a letter written at Badajos to Marshal Beresford, he insists "above all on a determination in the Superiors to obey the spirit of the orders they receive, let what will be the consequences."

In addressing privately the Secretary of State for War many months later, referring to this period, and the conduct of Detachments employed at Majuba, I wrote: "The depressing effect of the Majuba affair on officers and men at Camp Prospect lasted for some time, but we should undoubtedly have taken the Nek about the end of March; and I think such a victory would have been a gain to all, English, Dutch, Kafirs, and to Humanity generally, and that it would have been cheaply purchased, even had you lost your generals and a large number of troops. I confess I am disappointed at some of the criticisms on my duty in England. It is assumed by many that the generals in command of troops should disregard the orders of the responsible advisers of the Crown, if such orders are distasteful to him and the troops."

Mr. Childers, who always treated me with the greatest consideration and kindness, in replying on the 21st July, thus expressed his views: "I do not think you need be in the least way unhappy about Newspaper criticisms. Everyone knows you are guided by Instructions from home, which the telegraph makes now more detailed than ever."

In a letter to my wife, dated the 4th May, endeavouring to console her for the vexation she felt at the unsparing criticisms on my conduct, I wrote: "My life has been spent in worrying the Boer leaders about the murderers of Messrs. Elliott and Barbour. You ask me how much of the feeling in England was known to me? I reply, I always anticipated a great outcry, for I have read History, but such outcry will, I hope, never influence me in Public events. I could not go beyond the clear words of the Instructions I received. So long as I serve out here I shall loyally carry out, not only the words, but the spirit of the orders of the Ministry, if that body is led by Gladstone or Stafford Northcote. We are all astonished here at the Praise and Blame measured out to me on the subject. I should utterly despise myself if I allowed personal feelings to sway me in a matter of Life and Death. I wished to fight, not because I am willing to purchase reputation by expending our soldiers' lives, but because I believed, and believe that by fighting, the peace of this country could be assured, as it will not be now. I am as vexed at the Praise as I am at the Blame, which is so freely accorded to me. Do not distress yourself, Dearest; I value my own sense of duty much more than the opinion of anyone."

suggest I wait for a day or two, as I shall not be ready for another week, and then I must act if Potchefstroom is to be saved. When I move, I am confident, with God's blessing, of success."

I received late, on the 4th March, a communication from Mr. Piet Joubert, enclosing a telegram from Mr. Brand, and asking would I meet him? I replied, I would meet him on the 6th; and while informing Lord Kimberley, added, "My constant endeavour shall be to carry out your orders; but considering the disasters we have sustained, I think the happiest result will be that after a successful action, which I hope to fight in about fourteen days, the Boers should disperse without any guarantees, and then many now undoubtedly coerced will settle down." Later in the day I telegraphed: "Joubert is coming to meet me. Shall follow strictly the lines of your instructions."

I rode out about 17 miles to O'Neill's, an empty farm at Prospect, on the afternoon of the 5th, and was deciphering telegrams till 9 p.m., when I asked Walkinshaw for my eye-douche, the rose of which could not be found; and I desired him somewhat impatiently to call me at 4 a.m., at which hour he held a jug over my head. "What's the use; you left the rose behind?" "It's here." "Where was it?" "On the mantelpiece." It was only months later I learned he had ridden to Newcastle and back, 34 miles, swimming twice the Ingogo River, in fording which an officer and some men had been lost on the 8th February.

I met Mr. Joubert and three Boer leaders on the 6th March, and at their request, in order to allow time for Mr. Kruger, who was then near Rustenberg, to reply to Sir George Colley's communication, agreed to an armistice for eight days, *i.e.* to midnight on the 18th March. The Boers undertook to pass eight days' supplies to the invested garrisons, and inform them of the Truce, which was to count only from the arrival of the supplies. I telegraphed this arrangement to Mr. Brand, and begged him to ensure the faithful transmission of the news to Potchefstroom, which he undertook the same day to do.

I telegraphed to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, and for War: "Want of food prevents advance for about ten days. Ingagane and Incandu are impassable. I have therefore lost nothing in suspending hostilities, and gained eight days' food for the garrisons most in want." Next day the Cabinet

approved my action, not only in the Political, but also in the Military point of view.

On receipt of this message I replied to Lord Kimberley, 8th March: "Do not imagine I wish to fight, I know the attending misery too well; but now you have so many troops coming, I recommend decided though lenient action, and I can, humanly speaking, promise victory. Colley never engaged more than six companies; I shall use twenty, and two Cavalry regiments, in directions known only to myself, and I undertake to enforce dispersion."

That same day Lord Kimberley, telegraphing with reference to my telegram of the 5th March, in which, while suggesting an amnesty for leaders, I urged, "The happiest results will be after a successful action, which I hope to fight in about fourteen days," replied, "There will be complete amnesty. . . . We will now appoint Commissioners for friendly communications to Boers." Later in the day he telegraphed, "Prolong Armistice as needful."

On the 11th March, in referring to my telegram of the 9th, showing the food supplies in the garrisons, I asked if the Armistice was to be prolonged, stating, "The situation on military grounds scarcely justifies prolongation, certainly not beyond the 18th March." And in reply I received orders "To prolong the Armistice, and inform the Boers, if they desisted from armed opposition, a Royal Commission, consisting of Sir Hercules Robinson, Sir Henry de Villiers, and yourself, will be appointed to consider the giving back of the Transvaal, subject to British Suzerainty, a Resident at Capital, and provisions for guarding native interests, Mr. Brand being present as representing the Friendly State."

On the 12th March, Lord Kimberley telegraphed: "In order to enable me to answer questions in Parliament, inform me whether suggestions for Armistice proceeded from you or Joubert, or from whom?" I might have replied briefly, "From you. See your telegram of 16th February."[1] Although Mr. Kruger on the 16th March, in the conference under Lang's

[1] Telegram from Secretary of State for the Colonies to Major-General Colley:—

"*16th February* 1881.

"Your telegram of the 13th. Inform Kruger that if Boers will desist from armed opposition we shall be quite ready to appoint Commissioners with extensive powers,

Nek, claimed the credit of the Armistice, as being the result of his letter of the 12th February to Sir George Colley. However, appreciating Lord Kimberley's difficulties in the Houses of Parliament, I replied: "Mount Prospect, 14th March. Whole history of Armistice. 3rd March, Brand appealed to me, as former friend of Boers, to stop bloodshed, by arranging temporary cessation of hostilities. 4th March, Sent my answer to you. 5th March, You approved. 3rd March, Brand appealed to Joubert to meet me to arrange armistice. 4th March, Joubert sending me Brand's message; asks how far I will co-operate so (*sic*) he wishes to stop his patrols. 5th March, I offered to meet him on the 6th."

During the next few days I had much discussion with some of the Boer leaders, who were, however, unable to give definite opinions on many points, as Mr. Kruger,[1] whom they all regarded as their chief, was still absent. I wrote to Lady Wood on the 15th March: "Buller, who went with me to meet Joubert yesterday, thinks the Boers will go on fighting. I think they will not, if we concede all that Lord Kimberley has telegraphed."

His Lordship had sketched roughly to me before I left London his views regarding the Government of the territories inhabited mainly by Natives after the retrocession of the Transvaal, but his views were not in accordance with the wishes of the Boers, who subsequently, in consequence of the recommendation of two of the Royal Commissioners, obtained what they wanted.

I told the Boers plainly on the 15th that the Government would not consent to the recall of our garrisons until the country was handed over by a Royal Commission, and on this point, which had been represented as one of paramount importance, they gave way. We talked for hours on the 16th, and I telegraphed that evening to Lord Kimberley as

and who may develop scheme referred to in my telegram to you of 8th inst. Add that if this proposal is accepted, you are authorised to agree to suspension of hostilities on our part."

[1] From Sir Evelyn Wood to the Secretary of State for the Colonies:—

"NEWCASTLE, *13th March*, 9.50 a.m.

"Kruger sending Reuter's 22nd February message, with Mr. Gladstone's statement that steps to avoid bloodshed will be taken, asks how far my instructions go. I have replied I am still awaiting your orders, and shall be at Prospect to-day."

follows: "After eight hours' talk I am confirmed in the opinion expressed in my telegram of the 5th instant, namely, 'Considering the disasters we have sustained, I think the happiest result will be that after a successful action which I hope to fight, the Boers should disperse without any guarantees.' On the 19th, the Boers who were in telegraphic communication through the Free State with Parliamentary and other supporters in London, abated their tone considerably, and in writing that night to my wife I said, "Buller now thinks they will not fight; if they do, we shall beat them."

On the 20th, Lord Kimberley replied to my telegram of the 16th as follows: "I have not heard from you the result of your communication to the Boers relative to my telegram of the 17th inst. We rely upon you, unless Military Necessity requires immediate action, to give us time to consider points on which you may not be able to come to agreement with the Boers."

On the 21st March the Boers accepting Lord Kimberley's terms, including any separation of land in the interests of the natives which the Royal Commission might consider necessary, agreed to disperse; and while informing Lord Kimberley, I telegraphed to the Secretary of State for War asking him to see the telegram, and added, "If authorised, can advance 24th, but may be delayed by rivers." On the 22nd, Lord Kimberley approved of the conditions under which the Boers undertook to disperse; and on the 24th nearly all their waggons had moved off, about 1,800 remaining on the Nek to receive me as I descended from the Majuba with the Boer leaders, who had ascended to show me the respective positions of the contending forces on the 27th February.

At a breakfast given to me on the Boer position there were three young couples who were to have been married six months earlier, but the girls, like all the Boer women, declined to have anything to say to lovers or husbands until Peace was made, and it was, I believe, mainly owing to the influence of the women that the spirit of the Rebellion was maintained.

It is remarkable that none of us ever heard either Boer leader boast, or even speak in a tone of exultation, of their successes. This was not the case with the young men, but the leaders on every occasion ascribed the result of their

struggles to the intervention of the Almighty. Mr. Brand asserted that another check to our arms would have brought into the field all the young Dutchmen of South Africa. As I telegraphed to Lord Kimberley, "A check, humanly speaking, was impossible;" and in spite of Brand's experience, assuming one occurred, I could endorse his opinion only as regards the Free State men, of whom there were about 300 on the Lang's Nek position on the morning of the 24th March.

I had much interesting conversation with Mr. Joubert during the intervals of the negotiations. He was by far the most far-seeing and moderate of the Boer leaders. I was told on the 24th, when the Boers were dispersing, that Joubert had had considerable trouble to obtain the assent of the different Commandoes (detachments) to Lord Kimberley's conditions, many of the leaders objecting strenuously to any interference with the power of the Boers to deal with the Natives. Joubert did not tell me, but I learnt while on the Nek, that the evening before it was decided to accept the British terms, Joubert, after a long discussion, said, with some heat, and decision, "I advise you to accept these terms, which are liberal; and if you refuse them, you had better nominate another Commandant-General, for I do not mean to fight."

When talking to him alone I said, "You dislike our reservations about Native territories. Why not stand out, and let us have another fight?" "Oh," he replied, "I do not want any more bloodshed." "Well, as you are not quite satisfied with the terms, why not fight again; you say you have won three times?" "Yes, but we shall not win again now, and I am in favour of a peaceful settlement."

On my return to Newcastle I received the following telegram: "22nd March. Her Majesty's Government desire to convey to you their high sense of your conduct in the recent proceedings, and the skill and judgment you have shown throughout in your communications with the Boer leaders."

I had heard from Lord Kimberley on the 1st April that he thought it desirable I should go to Pretoria and explain the Situation, and replied I had already placed relays of horses, and was starting on the 3rd April.

I travelled in a "Spider" drawn by two Artillery horses, and at Paarde Kop, a few miles out of Prospect, the driver having

dismounted to adjust some harness, left the horses' heads, and they started off while I was in the carriage. The man made a determined effort to stop them, and catching the rein, was dragged a hundred yards, when the horses breaking into a gallop he let go. As the Spider bounded over an ant-bear heap I was tossed out, falling on my spine on the off horse's head. Very little damage was done to the carriage, and in a short time we were again on the track.

When I reached Heidelberg at sunset on the 4th, I found the Boer flag flying over the Court House in the market square, and going up to speak to the sentry, who did not understand English, he showed such decided intention of shooting me if I interfered with the flag, that I went back to the hotel, and sending for Messrs. Pretorius and Smidt, desired them to have the flag hauled down. To this they demurred, and attempted to argue the point. Eventually bidding them good-night, I said, "You have got several hours to think about it, but if at 6 a.m. to-morrow—now, please compare your watches—that flag is flying, I shall pull it down with my own hands, and assuming the same man is on sentry he will shoot me. This will be unpleasant for my family, but honestly speaking I think it will be a gain for England. You gentlemen believe, and rightly, Mr. Gladstone has great power with the British Public, but not even he will be able to give you back your country if you are so foolish as to shoot a Governor, who dies insisting on your carrying out the terms under which you dispersed from Lang's Nek. There cannot be two Governments in the country at one moment."

At daylight next morning I looked out from my window and saw the flag was flying,[1] and exactly at six o'clock, telling Walkinshaw what I was about to do, I walked across the square to the flag-staff. As I approached it, saying a little prayer, for I thought that my last moment had come, the non-commissioned officer in charge of the guard hauled down the flag, and Smidt coming out, admitted that his argument of the previous evening had been fallacious.[2]

[1] The Boers did not haul down their flags at sunset.

[2] I thought I was the only British officer in Heidelberg, but Colonel Fortescue, K.R.R. Corps, came in that evening from Lydenburg, as he mentioned to Mr. Butcher, M.P. for York, and myself when we were riding in Hyde Park in 1900.

I left Pretoria on the 8th, sleeping at Heidelberg that night, where I met the Boer leaders, who apologised for Cronje's dishonourable conduct in withholding the terms of the armistice from the Potchefstroom Garrison, and they begged to be absolved from any complicity in the act, which they desired should be undone as soon as possible by the surrender being cancelled, and the Arms and Ammunition returned. This was done, and a Garrison replaced for a short time.

I was more injured in my fall than I realised at the time, and in the next two or three days the irritation set up in the spine was so severe as to make my feet swell to an enormous size. I had necessarily to ride about at Pretoria, and thus made myself worse; and when leaving Heidelberg on the return journey was in such agony that I could travel only propped up with pillows and rugs, with my feet higher than my body. When I was lifted out of the Spider at Standerton, and the doctor asked me to turn over, I said, "That is impossible; you must turn me." I had lost all power of movement. Rolling me over, he injected some morphia close to the back-bone, and in a few minutes, saying, "Oh, this is Heaven," I slept soundly many hours in succession, for the first time since the accident.

I vexed the High Commissioner somewhat by my persistence in urging him to come up to Natal and open the Commission. He probably thought I was unreasonable in not estimating sufficiently the importance of his Constitutional position, as regards the Ministers of the Cape, who at this time, as indeed was often the case, were uncertain how long they would hold office. On the other hand, Lord Kimberley wishing me to persuade the Boer leaders to provide for our current expenditure, was asking what arrangements I proposed as to Revenue and Expenditure of the Government during the interval before they got Self-government. I pointed out that we could hope to get nothing out of the country, and for that reason I wanted the interval shortened, and had therefore been urging the High Commissioner to come up as soon as possible. I explained to him, and to Lord Kimberley, that as the entire expenditure for the purposes of governing the Transvaal was only one-twelfth of the military expenditure, which could not be reduced without the troops being sent away, we had every reason for giving over the country as soon as possible. In the

meantime the young Boers who had not seen the troops assembled in the North of Natal, were somewhat impatient with their leaders, and inclined to get out of hand.[1]

I had plenty of occupation before the High Commissioner arrived, for I held daily conferences with the Boer leaders for the purpose of bringing to justice the murderers of Major Elliot, Paymaster, who was shot while crossing the Vaal River, into which the Boers forced him and his companion, Captain Lambart; and the case of Doctor Barbour, who was murdered under somewhat similar circumstanees, a few hundred yards inside the Free State boundary. There was no doubt of the identity of the murderers in either case, but to obtain a conviction was unusually difficult, as martial law had not been proclaimed. Sir Henry de Villiers, my colleague, the Chief Justice of Cape Colony, advised me that to try the men by court-martial would be to create *ex post facto* legislation, and with the prevailing feeling in the Transvaal, trial by Boers for such deeds would have been useless.

The Free State judge who tried Barbour's murderers, in spite of the evidence given by Mr. —— that he saw —— fire at Barbour, advised the jury: "If you are not certain that —— shot Mr. Barbour, you should give the prisoner the benefit of the doubt," and so they did. Similarly, Major Elliot's murderers were acquitted, in spite of Captain Lambart's evidence, who escaped only by diving like a duck in the Vaal River.

When not inquiring into such and somewhat similar cases of outrage, not, however, involving loss of life, I spent many hours, averaging 16 daily, in considering the affairs of Zululand, where the system of dividing up the country amongst a number of Chiefs had become unsatisfactory. Several Chiefs complained of acts of oppression by Usibebu, and Mnyamane complained of oppression at the hand of Uhamu. In the opinion of Lord Kimberley the terms of settlement had not

[1] With reference to the Boers' conduct, I suggested another appeal to arms. From Sir Evelyn Wood to the Secretary of State for the Colonies:—

"19*th April.*

"I should allow them to reoccupy Nek. We are quite ready. This will give a decisive military result, and the happiest result for the country. I guarantee we dislodge them."

contemplated any interference on the part of the British, so in telegraphing to him on the 13th April I said, "All these Chiefs have asked me to inquire into the matters in dispute, and to give a decision which they bind themselves to carry out, but I am not certain how you will regard my giving any decision. Shall I do so, or let the Chiefs fight it out?" Next day His Lordship told me to decide the matter, which I did four months later.[1]

[1] Extract from the Secretary of State for the Colonies to Sir Evelyn Wood :—

"*1st November.*

"I am quite satisfied with the result of your visit to Umbandeen, which will no doubt have been very useful, and I think you have done all that was possible in the circumstances to settle Zulu affairs.—KIMBERLEY."

CHAPTER XXXVIII

1881—A ROYAL COMMISSION

Charles Dickens' story of the Fleet Prison paralleled—I ask permission to leave Royal Commission, but am refused—Gallop after wild ostrich—A jail delivery in Pretoria—Visit to the Inhlazatse, and Lotiti—My Dissent to the Report of the Royal Commission—Hotel at Beumbei—Delagoa Bay.

ALTHOUGH I had delegated to the Colonial Secretary much of the routine work of the Colony of Natal, I had to take action on some cases, and in writing to Lord Kimberley on the 31st May I mentioned that in 1878 I had met in the Colony a magistrate who was then, I thought, inefficient; that in 1880, when I next saw him, he had sunk still lower, and was in 1881 a drunkard; and on inquiry I found the Colonial regulations were so framed as to practically check any action on the Governor's part, and I was advised by the Colonial Secretary to leave the matter alone. Eventually, however, the magistrate's conduct became so flagrant that I assembled a Committee of inquiry, and the result indicated that Charles Dickens, in *Pickwick*, need not have drawn on his imagination for "Jemmy" or "Number 20," confined in the Fleet Prison. There was one person in the jail of the little town where the magistrate resided, who was taken out every night by a constable to the hotel that he might play billiards with the magistrate, and on several occasions the prisoner brought the constable back at night drunk. The jailer was always ordered to wait up until the game was finished; but as it was frequently protracted till past midnight, he eventually warned the prisoner that unless he came in at reasonable hours he would lock him out!

On the 7th May, Sir Henry de Villiers arrived, and assisted in endeavouring to persuade the Triumvirate, as I had been

trying to do since the 29th April, to institute a searching inquiry into the murder of Major Elliott and some other Europeans. This was a work of much difficulty, as the Boers were unwilling to admit, although the victims were dead, that they had been killed under unjustifiable circumstances.

Next day the High Commissioner, Sir Hercules Robinson, arrived, and on the 8th the Royal Commission was formally opened. It was obvious that the views of Sir Hercules and myself differed on many essential points. It appeared to me also that Sir Henry Villiers wished to set up a form of Government incompatible with the paramount authority of England, whereas I appeared to him to be unwilling to repose that confidence in his fellow-countrymen which he felt. After a fortnight's close attention to the work of the Royal Commission I called on the President, for whom I had hired a farm outside Newcastle as a residence, and informed him I should like to withdraw from the work imposed on me. He laughingly explained that he had had a similar suggestion from Sir Henry that morning.

Many of the subjects under consideration were new to my colleagues, and required, therefore, more consideration from them than it was necessary for me to give who had been in that part of South Africa for nearly two years previously; and while they were thus engaged, by laying on horses I was enabled to inspect the Garrisons at Wesselstroom, Utrecht, and battalions encamped along the line of communication, going as far as the Biggarsberg, and Ladysmith.

On the 1st June the High Commissioner and Sir Henry started in a carriage, I remaining behind for a few days to do some military work which had fallen in arrears during our sittings, which extended from seven to eight hours daily. By riding up with relays of horses I was able to cover the distance much quicker than was possible in a spider.

It was my misfortune, while maintaining cordial relations with my brother Commissioners, to differ entirely with them in many matters brought before us, and I protested against my colleagues telling the Boers that we were waiting at Newcastle for Lord Kimberley's reply to the reference we had made on the question of boundaries. I pointed out to Sir Henry de

Villiers, who had told them in conversation why we were waiting, that the fact of our moving up to Pretoria must show the Boers that the British Government had accepted the advice of the majority of the Commission, against mine, which, as the Boers knew, was antagonistic to their views. My brother Commissioners had telegraphed on the 1st June to the following effect: "The Boers say[1] that they left the Boundary question with the Royal Commission for the sake of peace at the Nek, in full confidence that they would lose nothing by doing so. The leaders do not now wish to retract, but they point out that the people would not acquiesce." My brother Commissioners for these reasons recommended that we should give back the whole of the Transvaal, including the country adjoining Native States. I dissented, maintaining we had carried concessions to the utmost limit, and pointed out that the Boers admitted I had told them distinctly on the Nek that I would do my utmost to prevent their ruling any territory bordering on Native territories.

At the same time I pointed out to the Secretary of State for War the inconvenience of the Natal frontier when any question of a Military offensive is contemplated, explaining it had every possible defect, without one compensating advantage.

On receipt of this decision against my recommendations I telegraphed to Lord Kimberley: "When peace was made my views on the most important question, that of the Boundary, were well known here, and were, as I thought, the views of the Government, as expressed in your telegram of the 17th March. These opinions are so entirely opposed to those of my colleagues, which you have since approved, that I am induced to represent to you that as the Border Natives look to me for protection, and may possibly regard my future action with suspicion if I continue to serve in the Commission, I am compelled in justice to you to suggest for your decision whether your policy might not be better carried out by withdrawing me from the Commission, and allowing me to devote all my time to Natal, the Army, and the Zulu settlement. My chief colleague, with whom my relations are

[1] Mr. Brand told them at the Nek, unknown to me, that if they gave way he was confident the British Government would not curtail the Transvaal.

cordial, wishes me to remain, and advises me not to ask you, but I have no fear of your misunderstanding my motives."

To this telegram the Government replied on the 9th: "We appreciate your motives in suggesting retirement from Commission, but cannot accept your offer. We attach much importance to the retention of your services on Commission, your retirement from which cannot fail to have prejudicial effect on prospects of peaceful settlement. Our agreement with majority on Boundary question does not imply any diminution of our confidence in you."

On the 12th June, about 25 miles outside Pretoria, my Aide-de-camp and I enjoyed some good runs after a herd of wild ostriches, which we chased with hunting whips merely for the pleasure of a gallop, for when the birds could run no farther we left them to recover their breath. I do not know whether it is the habit of the ostrich in all places, but these were not difficult to run down, inasmuch as, after running at speed for a mile, say from East to West, they would turn and go back in a parallel line, and thus two men by judiciously nursing their horses could overtake them.

From the 13th of June to the end of July I sat six days a week discussing with the Triumvirate and their advisers the many and varied questions incidental to giving back the Government of the Transvaal.

I was anxious to agree with my colleagues on Public grounds, and one of my military advisers urged me to do so for personal reasons, but I felt bound to record my Dissent[1] to

[1] My Dissent was published in *Blue Book, Transvaal Royal Commission Report*, Part I., C. 3114, pages 34 and 56–66, issued in 1882, but a subsequent edition issued soon afterwards omitted my Dissent, which I therefore republish.

Sir Evelyn Wood, while concurring generally with the views of his colleagues, feels bound to record the grounds of his dissent on certain points, at the end of which Dissent he has signed the report.

DISSENT.

As regards the question treated in paragraph 16, viz. the trial of those accused of murder during the late hostilities, Sir Evelyn Wood desires to place on record, that, in a telegram of the 30th March, he gave an opinion adverse to the trial of these persons, either by Boers or by ordinary process, and recommended the creation of a Special Tribunal: eventually, however, the Commission recommended the course which was adopted.

the recommendations formulated by Sir Hercules Robinson and Sir Henry De Villiers.

The Chief of the Staff, Sir Redvers Buller, took nearly all

2. With reference to the territorial question, Sir Evelyn Wood is unable to concur with his colleagues in the arguments which led them to recommend the abandonment of the Scheme of Separation of Territory agreed to at Lang's Nek. Paragraphs 44 to 53, of this report, give the arguments of the Boer Leaders against the separation of any territory East of the 30th degree of longitude.

These objections must have been just as evident to the Leaders, when treating with Sir Evelyn Wood at Lang's Nek, as when treating with the Commission at Newcastle. At Lang's Nek, they acquiesced in the principle of separation of territory; that they did so is, Sir Evelyn Wood thinks, a proof that they preferred peace, with the proposed separation, to a continuance of war.

To contend afterwards that the Royal Commission ought not to decide contrary to the wishes of the Boers, because such decision might not be accepted, is to deny to the Commission the very power of decision that it was agreed should be left in its hands.

In paragraphs 53 and 54, the majority of the Commission hold that sentiment was the mainspring of the late outbreak, and imply that none of the peace stipulations antagonistic to this feeling can be enforced, without detriment to the permanent tranquillity of the country. Sir Evelyn Wood cannot concur with even the premisses of his colleagues, and he is convinced the approximate cause of the late outbreak was a general and rooted aversion to taxation.

His colleagues appear to have received the statements of the Leaders as expressing the feelings of their followers. In Sir Evelyn Wood's opinion, the views of the Triumvirate should have been accepted with reserve; and he could not attach the same value that the majority of the Commission did, to the Leaders' account of Boer sentiments. As it was, his colleagues arrived at their conclusions on this question in Newcastle, before the Commission had entered the Transvaal, and practically before they had any opportunity of learning the wishes of the inhabitants, except through the mouths of the Leaders.

As Sir Evelyn Wood cannot accept the conclusions of his colleagues, based on the arguments of the Boers, still less can he accept those they have arrived at in paragraphs 56 and 57, on the aspect of the Native question. It is argued that by concessions to the Boers on the Territorial question, the Commission would obtain large powers for the British Resident, and also gain the consent of the Boers to conditions not contained in the peace agreement, viz. :—

The creation of a Native Location Commission; the right of Veto on Native Legislation; and the settlement of the disputed boundary of the Keate Award territory;—all of which will, the majority of the Commission think, form the best guarantees for the protection of all Native interests.

Schedule 2 of the Agreement of the 21st March 1881 left to the Commission to define, and to the British Government to determine, what powers should be assigned to the Resident, and what provision should be made for the protection of Native interests, while Schedule 3 made complete self-government *subject to Suzerain rights*.

It is not apparent to Sir Evelyn Wood that in the Convention any powers greater than those justified by the peace agreement have been so assigned to the Resident: and the creation of a Native Location Commission: the power of veto on Native Legislation: and the settlement of the Keate Award question, appear to him to be matters so directly affecting Native interests, as to be entirely within the scope of the Agreement of the 21st March: however, be this as it may, he cannot believe

the routine work off my hands, but I continued to pay attention to questions of army training, as I foresaw they might have great importance in the future.

that any power the Government or the Resident may derive from the Convention will prove as beneficial to the Natives as would the existence of British Rule Eastward of the 30th degree of longitude.

It is admitted that all the Eastern natives would prefer the retention of British Rule in this country, and also, that it would benefit them ; it is, however, argued that these are the Natives best able to protect themselves.

To a certain degree this is correct, but we have recently destroyed the military power of the Zulu nation, and have disarmed the people.

In the interests of the Transvaal, but at England's expense, we subdued Sikukuni, and we have checked the acquisition of firearms by all Natives.

Sir Evelyn Wood maintains, therefore, that the Eastern tribes are not so capable of defence as to be independent of our protection ; and while admitting they are not so defenceless as are those on the Western border of the Transvaal, he submits that the arguments of his colleagues prove more conclusively the importance of protecting the Natives on the West, than the desirability of withdrawing protection from those on the East side of the Transvaal.

Sir Evelyn Wood's colleagues admit the desirability of retaining the Eastern territory under British Rule, and the substantial benefit to the Natives living therein and to the Eastward of it ; but they argue that those in the West, who, by their position are unavoidably excluded from our protection, would have suffered loss by missing those favourable conditions which have been secured to them by the Convention. The value of the said conditions must be a matter of opinion until tested by time ; and the necessity for making concessions to obtain them is not, Sir Evelyn Wood submits, apparent : but whichever may be the more accurate view, in summing up numerically the interests concerned, the question cannot be confined to those named, but should be considered to extend indirectly to all the natives in South-East Africa.

Sir Evelyn Wood agrees with his colleagues in thinking that the grounds for retaining the country East of the Drakensberg, are less cogent than those for retaining the whole territory East of the 30th degree, and he admits that the relatively small number of the Transvaal natives, East of the Drakensberg, does not alone justify the proposed rectification of boundaries, but he cannot follow his colleagues in the rest of their argument, and thinks that, while studying how best to balance the interests of Boers and Natives, they have overlooked, what was to him, the most important factor in the question, viz. :—the interests of the English Colonies in South Africa. The proposal for a separation of territory proceeded from Her Majesty's Government. In the month of March, when the negotiations at Lang's Nek were approaching completion, Sir Evelyn Wood submitted to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, what he considered would be (for British and Native interests) the most suitable boundaries for the Transvaal in case we left it.

The Commission being opposed to the retention of the territory lying to the Eastward of the 30th degree of longitude, Sir Evelyn Wood suggested as a compromise, the retention of the District which lies to the East of the Drakensberg : but it was far less in the interests of its native population that the smaller measure was suggested, than for the sake of tranquillity in Swaziland, Zululand, and Natal. His colleagues have balanced the Eastern and Western Native question, by a comparison of numbers, but a glance at the map will show how very much more important it is to our Colonies to have quiet on the Eastern than on the Western borders. Separated as we now

I used the privilege accorded to me by the Secretary of State of addressing him personally, in trying to provide for

shall be by the Transvaal from the Eastern Natives, it will be impossible for us to exercise over them the influence for peace due to our paramount position in the country.

It is from this cause, he thinks, trouble to England may arise, and this is the consideration which has led him to dissent from his colleagues on the Territorial question.

3. As to the question of belligerency, touched on in paragraphs 107 and 108, it should be borne in mind that although, by the Agreement of the 23rd March, immunity was granted to both the Leaders and to their followers, yet this did not apply to those "who had committed, or were directly responsible for acts contrary to civilised warfare." This is apparent from Schedule 4, of the Agreement of the 21st March, in which the Leaders engaged to co-operate with the British Government in bringing such persons to justice. Sir Evelyn Wood is therefore unable to agree that there was any question of amnesty in such cases, though the attitude of the Boers, no doubt, precluded the possibility of obtaining evidence.

4. In paragraphs 121 and 122, the question of compensation for damages due to war is considered, and the liability of the Boers, under the terms of the peace agreement, is questioned by one member of the Commission.

Sir Evelyn Wood, who negotiated the agreements of the 21st and 23rd of March, holds them to mean that the Royal Commission was empowered to settle questions of compensation for acts which were in its opinion not justified by the necessities of war, and also questions of compensation for acts fairly subjects for compensation.

In support of this view he stated that, during the peace negotiations, he had quoted, as an instance, the case of a Kafir whose crops had been consumed by the Boer Forces on Lang's Nek. This act was evidently justified by the necessities of war, but nevertheless in this case, as in that of all subjects of the Queen commandeered against their will, the justice of compensation was alike evident.

5. The next point on which Sir Evelyn Wood desires to touch, is the question of Sub-residents mentioned in paragraph 139.

While concurring with his colleagues that it was desirable to interfere as little as possible with the internal affairs of the Transvaal State, he was, however, of opinion that, in a country as large as France, it could not be expected any one individual, however active, would become acquainted with the real state of feeling of the Natives, and of their treatment by the Boers; and he considered that complaints, however just, would rarely, if ever, reach Pretoria. As regards the Natives external to the State, he held it would be impossible for a British officer resident in Pretoria to ascertain, without aid, their complaints, wishes, and intentions, or to exercise that peaceful influence over them so desirable in the interests of South Africa.

6. Lastly, on the question of remitting the expense of the successful war with Sikukuni, Sir Evelyn Wood dissented from the opinion of his colleagues. Until Sir Garnet Wolseley subdued Sikukuni, no Government was able to obtain taxes from his people, and he occasioned the Boer Government constant trouble and expense; the last expedition, under President Burgers, having reduced the Republic to the verge of bankruptcy.

When we last collected taxes in the country, the people were well disposed and paid cheerfully. Seeing, therefore, that the Boers are about to reap the benefits, both financial and peaceful, brought about by the war, it seemed to Sir Evelyn Wood but just that the Transvaal State should give some return to England for the expense incurred.

EVELYN WOOD, MAJOR-GENERAL.

the eventuality which occurred in 1899. I thought it would arise much sooner from the Boer State becoming bankrupt, as I had not foreseen the finding of gold mines. I wrote, 31st May: "It may be well to record in the War Office that when you send out the next Expedition to this country, all the Cavalry and Artillery should come from India. English horses require at least three months easy work after a sea voyage."

I had urged the importance of training Mounted Infantry, from 1874, and wrote to Mr. Childers on the 18th July 1881: "I desire to urge on your attention that the —— were surprised —— from having no Mounted men. I advocated, before I left this country in 1879, that in every battalion there should be some Mounted men to act as scouts." I shall shortly submit to H.R.H. a scheme for maintaining in peace time about twenty-five horses per battalion, and to instruct a succession of young soldiers in each company—say for four months, to ride sufficiently well to act as scouts."

Three Zulus came down from the interior, sent by their chief Umzila, for having been concerned in the killing of a Boer. The Chief's message was to the effect that he believed the men were guiltless, and had acted merely in self-defence, but as he trusted in the justice of the English he had sent them in to be tried. The situation was peculiar, for I personally had no confidence that they would be accorded a fair trial after we had left the country, and as they had walked 200 miles under the impression the British were to remain in the country I caused the interpreter to explain to them the actual position, coupled with the admonition that I thought in a few days' time the climate of Pretoria would be unfavourable to their health; and we saw no more of them.

During the conversation with them, while the interpreter who had spent his life in South Africa was putting their story into English for the benefit of the Royal Commission sentence by sentence, I observed: "These men live near the tribe who have the curious practice of piercing their baby girls with an assegai over the hips, and under the shoulder blades." My brother Commissioners doubted the existence of such a practice, and the interpreter stoutly averred that he had never heard of it. I explained to the President the operation of putting the

assegai through the muscles, and then a round stick in the holes, which is moved every twenty-four hours until the skin is healed. The baby girl on arriving at maturity has thus four holes in her to take the arms and legs of her future baby: whom she carries on her back while at work. The President asked the Zulus if this practice was universal in the tribe near them, and they answered: "Yes, all the baby girls are treated in that way."

On the 1st August, three days before the Retrocession, a Kafir came in from Rustenberg, about 60 miles distant, complaining that his son had been killed by a Boer, under the following circumstances: the Boer had taken an unusually fine beast out of the Zulu's herd, and the lad drove it back. Twice this operation of taking and recovering was performed, and then, according to the father's story, the Boer took the lad between his knees and broke his neck, as one wrings the neck of a chicken. I sent the depositions to Mr. Kruger, who expressed great concern at the supposition even of such an atrocious deed, and assured me that he would send off his State Attorney that evening to inquire into it. This he did, and ten days later I received a letter from him to the effect that he was sure I should be glad to hear that the State Attorney had come to the conclusion the lad's neck had been broken by a fall from a rock.[1] To this I could make no reply, but the conclusion at which the President of the Transvaal had arrived was the less satisfactory to me as I was aware that the State Attorney had been driven out in a carriage, with the attorney of the accused, by a near relative of the Boer who was supposed to have killed the lad, and that, moreover, having been close to the place, I could not remember the rocks whence the lad was stated to have fallen.

We left Pretoria on the 5th August, and on the 4th I had a Jail delivery. There was, however, one man in it serving a sentence of seven years for a peculiarly atrocious sexual out-

[1] In justice to Mr. Jorissen, I should mention that he informed a civilian, attached to the Royal Commission, that the case was, in his opinion, one of murder. Mr. Kruger's information as supplied to me was, moreover, erroneous, for later we heard the Court sentenced the Boer to a month's imprisonment for killing the Kafir herd. On the other hand, the Transvaal High Court ordered a man who seduced a Dutch girl to pay the parents a solatium of £1000, and £7, 10s. a month for the maintenance of his child until it was twenty-one years of age. This statement gives, I think, a fair indication of the mind of the Transvaal Boer twenty-five years ago.

rage, and, thinking Mr. Kruger would prefer he were not at large, I sent over to say that I had cleared the prison of all ordinary malefactors, and while I could not leave this man locked up without food or jailers, I assumed Mr. Kruger would sooner he was in prison than at large, and asked him whether he would undertake that the man should not die of starvation. The President sent back to say that he had no jailers, no money to hire them, and begged I would do whatever I liked,—leave the man locked up, or let him out, but he hoped not to use the jail for some time, and so one villain more was let loose in the Transvaal.

When the Commission broke up I went to the Inhlazatze Mountain in Zululand to interview the Chiefs put in authority under the arrangements made at the conclusion of the Zulu War. I gathered that there had been some improvement in the working of the settlement from the previous year, although there was still much oppression by the greater Chiefs, and it was evident that we were trying to civilise the Zulus quicker than was convenient. By the orders of the Secretary of State for the Colonies I impressed on the assembled Chiefs that they should inaugurate a system of Industrial schools. This proposal when understood was received in silence by all except Usibebu, who remarked quaintly, that he had already got a Bishop and a clergyman, and he thought that was enough for any black man.

When the interview was over I sent the Cavalry, which had been taken less as an escort than a guard of honour, back to Natal, and with Major Fraser,[1] Lieutenants Slade[2] and Hamilton,[3] and Mr. Brampton Gurdon,[4] rode to Lotiti, the head kraal of Umbandeen, King of the Swazis, intending to travel from this place to Delagoa Bay, and return to Maritzburg by Man-o'-war.

On the evening of the 1st September, when riding towards Mabamba's kraal, near the Inhlobane, where we intended to sleep, I saw several Zulus, carrying firewood on their heads, running to intercept us, and we halted till the leading man

[1] Now Major-General Sir Thomas Fraser, K.C.B.
[2] Now Major-General Slade, Royal Artillery.
[3] Now Major-General Sir Bruce Hamilton, K.C.B., Aldershot.
[4] Now Sir William Brampton Gurdon, Bart., M.P.

approached. After saluting, they stood staring at me. I said: "Why were you running?" "To see you, Lakuni." "Well, are you satisfied?" "Yes, we are glad to see you,—that's what we wanted." "Where is the satisfaction?" "Oh, we wanted to see you, because you fought against us." "Yes, I killed several of you." "That is true, but you never interfered with any of our women, and they were protected by you, and after the war you took no cattle from us; and as for your killing us, you are a soldier, and have to do what you are told, as we had." He and his companions lit fires for us, and procured milk from the surrounding kraals, and there came together a great assembly of both sexes, who gave me an ovation.

We had heard in Natal that there was a hotel at a place called Beeumbei, where we sent a letter addressed to the manager asking him to provide accommodation, as our arrival might not coincide with that of the Man-o'-war's gun-boat which was coming up to take us to Durban. Just as we were starting I received a kind letter from the Zulu Chief, Mr. Dunn (ordinarily called the White Zulu Chief), urging me not to attempt to go farther than Lotiti, as the party would probably get fever, which might be fatal. That the advice was not only kind, but well founded, is shown by the fact that of seven men who preceded us somewhat earlier or followed later all contracted fever, and five of them died,—the flat and marshy land between the Lebombo Mountains and the sea being at that time peculiarly fatal to Europeans. When riding towards Lotiti we passed two Swazis, and I said to Mr. Rudolph: "Look at the far man—I know his face—ask him if he has ever met me." The Swazi, greatly pleased, replied: "Yes, I took a message to Lakuni in Newcastle six months ago." We spent eight hours at Lotiti trying to explain to the King the position between the Boers and the British Government.

His Majesty, on our taking leave, proposed to have an ox slaughtered, but I told him that my retinue would prefer to have it at our resting-place that evening, and he asked in what other way he could show his respect for me, for I had sent him in 1878 and 1879 one or two horses and other presents on behalf of the Transvaal Government. I suggested that a present of chickens would be acceptable, and the King, who was a stout young man, attended by his Prime Minister and

chief warriors, proceeded to chase fowls, which they knocked down with knob-kerries, until the exertion was too much for him, and to our relief he allowed some of the Royal attendants to provide for our larder.

We had a guide from a kraal between Lotiti and the St. John River, which flows into Delagoa Bay, and he led us to the hotel at Beeumbei. We fully anticipated some kind of accommodation, and so were proportionately disappointed on seeing the so-called hotel was a straw hut arranged like a pagoda, about ten feet in diameter, on the upright support of which was pinned our letter asking for accommodation, and the guide who led us to the spot confided to us there was no human creature within 20 miles. There was a cask of Cape brandy in the hut, but nothing more.

The position was somewhat serious, for we had brought very few stores, and we had run out of every article of food except Umbendeen's fowls. We had for three days no rice, bread, vegetables, except sweet potatoes, or salt, the absence of which was perhaps the most felt after two meals of boiled fowl without anything to accompany it.

On the 8th September we had absolutely no food except these fowls, of which I was so tired I was unable to eat them, and went to sleep supperless. At 4 a.m. I was awakened by Slade shouting that the Gun-boat's cutter had arrived with a hamper of food and a dozen of champagne, to which my companions did full justice on the spot, I declining to lift my head until daylight. We had a pleasant pull down the St. John River, and getting on board the gun-boat reached Maritzburg via Durban late on the 11th September.

CHAPTER XXXIX

1881—MARITZBURG

Advice as to entertaining—Bishop Colenso—The opening of the Legislative Council—Preparations in the event of Boers declining to ratify the Convention — A long ride to the Drakensberg — Isandwhlana—My unpopularity dies out—How Colonists died around Colonel Durnford —Return to Chatham.

THE day after my arrival I received much advice as to my social duties, from official and unofficial personages, male and female, all kindly meant; but I made no distinctions in invitations, and disregarded also the suggestion I should not entertain, but save my salary and take it home.

I was under no misapprehension as to my unpopularity, for at the end of May, when I thought it was possible that the offer of the Governorship of Natal might be made to me later, I desired a friend to inquire whether the feeling in the Colony was so bitter, as to render such an appointment undesirable in the public interest.

After the Zulu War of 1879, Natal had given me a beautiful testimonial in recognition of my services in the Zulu War, and my correspondent asked the Honorary Secretary of the Committee, who not only selected the offering, but who had moreover come to Chatham in 1880 to present it to me, on behalf of the Colony, for an opinion. That gentleman answered: "Yes, the feeling is very bitter against him. Although some few still respect him, the majority regard him as the mouthpiece of Mr. Gladstone."

I therefore answered my adviser: "Yes, I am quite aware of the fact that I am unpopular, and I must be now as the instrument of the Government; but a long experience has shown me that dinner parties judiciously arranged afford satisfactory opportunities of dispelling unfavourable impressions. I do not

suppose for a moment that the question of dinner influenced the Colonists, but it gave them an opportunity of seeing me, and learning my views. The Durban people had but little opportunity of meeting me, but Messrs. Escombe [1] and Robinson [2] lived there. Both were in the Legislative Council, and were therefore brought in contact with me more frequently than many others, and when I left the country the inhabitants of Durban give a dinner and a ball in my honour, at which such pleasant things were said of me that I do not venture to repeat them. A more important gain, however, was that owing to my better acquaintance with the ministers they treated me as a friend, asked me later how much they ought to give an able Governor, and on my advice raised the salary by £1500 per annum.

One entertainment I gave was of an unusual nature, but afforded me great pleasure. Thinking my guests would be happier without my company, I got Redvers Buller to ask me and my Aides-de-camp to dine, so as to enable me to invite forty-five soldiers, a Sergeant, three of the escort of the 15th Hussars, and the band of the 58th Regiment, which played at Government House at least three times a week. The escort had been with me since March, and as a soldier, regarding the band as comrades, I had objected to pay them, and indeed never gave them anything beyond refreshments. I told Slade, my Aide-de-camp, I wanted the table dressed with flowers, and that the wines and food should be exactly as if I was entertaining the Legislative Council, which was done.

I entertained within three months three bishops, a dean, and an archdeacon, a Church of England missionary who had come from India to carry out a series of Revival services, and a Church of England chaplain who was the brightest of them all. He had behaved courageously in the fight near the Ingogo River, and with a copious vocabulary, a musical voice, and a seraphic face, filled every Sunday an iron Drill Hall which he hired, in spite of his charging a shilling entrance.

The greater dignitaries of the Church agreed in one point, their dislike to Bishop Colenso. He was about sixty-eight years of age, with a noble face, an accurate reflection of his mind. Although I could not defend his retention of the

[1] Who was made a Privy Councillor.

[2] Who was made a knight.

Bishopric when he ceased to accept the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch, I considered it to be my duty as Governor to attend the Church of the lawful Bishop of the Colony.

It was difficult for him to believe anything good of a white man, and although I became intimate with him, I never heard him admit anything against a Zulu. This mattered the less, however, as a great majority of Boers, and some Colonists acted on precisely opposite principles, and Colenso's championing of the black races was absolutely disinterested.

He was greatly distressed because he heard I had referred to Cetewayo at the meeting of Chiefs under the Inhlazatze as a scoundrel (Ishinga), which was absolutely incorrect. On the other hand, it was commonly said that two years earlier, immediately after the Zulu War, that the Bishop generally referred to me as "the man of blood."

The Bishop lived frugally, giving away a great part of his stipend in charity. As his house, Bishopstowe, was 7 miles from the church, I induced him occasionally to come in to Government House from Saturday to Monday; and though he and I disagreed on most Zulu questions, as indeed he had done with all my predecessors, yet I believe he felt that he was ever welcome by me. In a letter dated the 22nd October I wrote: "I trust whatever views you take of our respective duties, it will make no difference to our private relations."

I generally attended his church as a point of duty, though I went also to the Bishop of Maritzburg's church, and to the Army chaplain's. What the Bishop of Natal read was uncontroversial sound doctrine, but as a preacher he was singularly ineffective. Very short-sighted, he held his manuscript close to his eyes, thus his beautiful snowy white hair was the only thing visible to the small congregation.

In the house he was a delightful companion. He made my acquaintance as I passed through Maritzburg in 1878, mainly, I believe, because he supposed I had been oppressing Umquikela, chief of the Pondos, and now in 1881 I found him a delightful guest. Sitting alone together one evening, I asked: "Are you the man who wrote that terrible Arithmetic over which I shed tears at school?" "Did you really shed tears over my Arithmetic?" "Yes, often." "Well, when I was a small boy I shed tears over every Arithmetic put into

my hands, and I resolved I would write one by which boys would learn without tears." I replied: "Ah, Bishop, but you could not write down to my level."

One of the other bishops, when attacking Dr. Colenso, virulently observed to me: "I do not know why you call him Bishop; he is not one." "Well, he is the Bishop of Natal." "But he is only a bishop from what the lawyers say." I answered: "They did not appoint him, the Queen did, and She is the only Head of the Church whom I recognise."

On the 6th of October I opened the Legislative Council, and the comments in the local papers were varied and amusing. The writers, despairing of finding something on which they could remark, turned to my delivery of the Speech. The Editor of the Radical paper observed the only good point in it was the perfect delivery; but he wound up by saying it was exactly like Edison's phonographic machine!

Another paper declared that I spoke exactly like a Sergeant-Major giving an order to a Squad, while the Government Gazette remarked on my foreign habit of rolling my *r*'s. This last interested me most of all, because I still remember the tears which came into my eyes at Marlborough in 1847 as I counted the verses in the Bible which each boy had to read on Sunday afternoon, and saw that my fate would bring me to the 40th verse of the 18th Chapter of St. John, and when my turn came I popped up and said, "Now, Bawabbas was a wobber."

Early in October the British Cabinet became perturbed by reports that the Raad sitting in Pretoria would not ratify the Convention under which the Boers had assumed the Government of the Transvaal in August, and Mr. Gladstone determined that they should either ratify it, or lose their Self-government. I was offered any reinforcements I required, but asked only for horses, mules, and one battery of Horse Artillery.[1]

I no longer got all the telegrams from Pretoria, as the Resident communicated direct with the High Commissioner at Cape Town; but what made the Government uneasy was a strongly worded telegram sent by the Boers to Mr. Gladstone. I explained in a telegram to the Colonial Office that in my

[1] It should be remembered that the Boers at this time had no Artillery.

opinion the Boers fully intended to ratify, and that the aggressive telegram had been drafted by a Hollander, and the result showed that my surmise was correct. Doubtless it was difficult for the Government at Home to read between the lines of the information which they had received. I asked the Resident for his views, and in a cypher telegram he answered: "Impossible to predict course the Raad will resolve on; I doubt if Leaders know. Equally difficult to predict action in case of non-ratification, nothing allowed to be divulged; Raad sits in secret."

I did not believe the Boer Government would prosper, for, writing to my wife on the 31st of May, I said: "I cannot believe that the Boer Republic will last." And again on the 13th October I wrote to her: "I am very glad the English Government has answered the Boers in firm language. . . . In a few years, however, we shall have to take over the country."

This forecast would have been absolutely correct had it not been that the discovery of gold kept Mr. Kruger and his associates in power for eighteen years.

Although I anticipated the Convention would be ratified, I took precautions, and bought, in different parts of Natal, a number of oxen and a great quantity of mealies, at normal rates, without attracting attention.

I was satisfied with my preparations for secret service. As I wrote to Mr. Childers: "I ought to learn what goes on South of the Vaal; one man is entirely with us in heart, and I have two more I can buy. I had a Zulu in my service who brought me information from near Ulundi in 1879, and he was always accurate, although it is more difficult with the Boers."

I enjoyed on the 4th of November a long ride to Langabalele's location. I had been suffering from intestinal complaints for eight days, induced by overwork, and I thought, and as it proved correctly, that I should get better from change of air and exercise, so Slade and I left after lunch and rode to Weston on the Mooi River, 42 miles. Next day, leaving at 4.30 a.m., we covered 71 miles before two o'clock; I settled a land question,[1] overruling the decision given four

[1] Sir George Colley's predecessor had expressed dissatisfaction with the award which had been given on a disputed land case, but he was no horseman, and

years previously, and then rode 42 miles into Maritzburg by seven o'clock. It was a good day's work, 110 miles in 14½ hours. My Aide-de-camp complained that he had to carry a chemist's shop for me, for besides a phial of medicine the doctor had made up for me, I had a bottle of essence of ginger and chlorodyne.

At the end of November I enjoyed another interesting ride by Rorke's Drift and Isandwhlana to the Ityatosi and back. I started Major Fraser, the Assistant Military Secretary, and the Aides-de-camp on the Saturday, and left with Sir Redvers Buller after church on Sunday, riding as far as Burrups, about 50 miles, and starting at three o'clock on Monday, crossing the Tugela, and afterwards riding up the Buffalo River, we reached Rorke's Drift, another 60 miles, in time for dinner. The heat was great, and the skin peeled off our noses and eyelids.

Next morning I conducted Sir Redvers over the battlefield of Isandwhlana, which he had never seen, and we had the story told by combatants who took part in the fights; Englishmen of the Natal Police, by Basutos, by friendly Zulus fighting on our side, and by two or three mounted officers of Cetewayo's army, which overwhelmed our forces. Their respective accounts tallied exactly; indeed, it seems as if uneducated men who cannot write are more accurate in their description of events than are the Western nations.

When Sir Redvers was quite satisfied that he knew all about the battle, he turned back, and went straight to Umsinga, I riding to the Ityatosi, where I had sent a photographer whom I had engaged to photograph the spot where the gallant Prince Imperial fell. This added another 50 miles to my journey beyond Rorke's Drift, where I dined on Monday night. Leaving after dinner, I joined Redvers Buller about 2 a.m., and rested for an hour at Umsinga, then, starting for Maritzburg, 80 miles distant, we arrived in time for dinner.

I had left the Sivewrights[1] in Government House, and

it was difficult to get to the spot on wheels. Sir George Colley equally doubted the propriety of the decision, and a quarter of an hour on the ground with a meeting of the contending parties left no doubt in my mind that the complaint of the Native was well founded.

[1] Now Sir James and Lady Sivewright.

found they were giving a small dinner party, not anticipating my return till the following evening; so telling the butler to lay an additional plate, I sat in the Governor's place as they entered the room, much to their astonishment.

On the 12th of December, at ten o'clock at night, while listening to a selection of Sacred music which the Colonel of the 21st Royal Scots Fusiliers had arranged that the band should perform for my pleasure, I got a telegram from Lord Kimberley, saying: "I shall have much satisfaction in recommending you for the appointment of Governor of Natal." I thought over it till six o'clock next morning, and then replied: "I appreciate highly the expression of your confidence, but must respectfully beg leave to decline."

I had ascertained some weeks earlier that the future Governor would not be permitted to command the troops, and decided not to accept if I got the offer, writing to my sister on 30/10/'81: "I propose to return through Egypt. That country must fall to us, or to France, or both, and it is as well I should have a look at it." The last week of my stay in the Colony showed plainly that the unfavourable impression regarding my conduct had died out, and indeed had been succeeded by a kindly sentiment for which I am still grateful.

Although the work had been unceasing, yet I had had the assistance of loyal and capable comrades. Sir Redvers Buller had taken all military details off my hands, while Major T. Fraser, R.E., afforded me the help of his fertile brain in Political matters. Captain Sandeman, the private secretary, had saved me from many mistakes as regards Natal affairs; while Lieutenant Slade, R.A., not only took all the trouble of entertaining upwards of two thousand guests in the three months off my hands, but gave me a slip of paper every Monday morning showing the numbers, and the cost per capita.

My visit to Isandwhlana was of great interest, the fall of the heroic Colonel Durnford, R.E., and the stand made by Natal policemen who stayed to die with him, in order to cover the retreat of the guns on the 22nd of January 1879, was the more touching in that he had spoken in terms of the conduct of the Police in the suppression of the Native out-

break in 1874, which had made him for some time unpopular in the Force.

I presented medals to a corps of Volunteers at Durban, many of whom had served in the war, and took the opportunity of speaking to the Colonists on the occasion of this parade,[1] which to some slight extent may explain the enthusiastic send-off I received at the end of December.

Kind friends, agreeing to forget the unpleasant memories following the disaster on the Majuba, vied with each other in offering me entertainments, the Burgesses of Durban presenting me with a beautiful vase and cups. The ladies said, "You may give him as many dinners as you like, but we must give him a Ball," and I went from one which followed the Farewell Dinner to me, direct on board a Union Steamship Company's vessel, which carried me to Lorenzo Marques, and there a few days later transhipped into another vessel, visiting Inhambane, Quillimane, Mozambique, and Zanzibar; we saw as much as was possible in a short time of Naples and Rome, and I resumed command at Chatham on the 14th February 1882.

[1] "Yet surely no greater proof of devoted steadiness was ever given than that shown by the Natal Carabiniers on the 22nd of January 1879. Imagine a gentle slope up which is storming a resistless, surging wave of encircling black bodies, which, though constantly smitten by leaden hail, breaks but to sweep on again with renewed force. Imagine a crowd of terrified non-combatants, and friendly Natives, flying through the already burning camp, and pressing on to the rapidly narrowing outlet over the fatal Nek.

"Then there comes on the scene a one-armed man, who, having slowly fallen back before the ever-increasing foe, is now determined to die. 'Save yourself, as for me I shall remain.' He thus dismisses the Staff officer, and H'Lubi's black soldiers, who vainly urge the great Chief to retreat with them.

"Recognising his commanding courage, around him gather some 20 similar spirits, who, nobly disdaining death, resolve to cover the retreat of the guns, or die with them.

"That melancholy field of Isandwhlana is a Record of what Colonists did, in Silence and Death, but none the less a living Record now and for ever. In the place where Durnford fell there was a heap of slain; the enemy lay thick about him, but your sons were as close, and the brave hearts of the best of your fighting men ceased to beat, in the effort to shelter their elected heroic leader. He himself was fully worthy of their devotion, and history will narrate how the ring of dead White men that encircled him, formed a halo round his, and their, renown."

CHAPTER XL

1882—CHATHAM AND ALEXANDRIA

Hospital Nurses—War Office denying my existence between December and February declines to issue even Half-Pay—Offered the Governorship of the Isle of Man—Cardinal Manning—Alexandria—A shell denudes a soldier of his trousers—Smith-Dorrien—Mr. Gladstone in Downing Street—Return to Egypt.

I WAS very happy at Chatham, being on good terms with all the officers, including the Medical officers, the senior of whom would not agree with me, however, as to the desirability of having female nurses to attend the soldiers, a reform which has happily since been carried into effect. He was one day arguing with me that Female nurses were entirely out of place in a Military Hospital, so I told him of a scene I had witnessed in the general Hospital under his charge only forty-eight hours earlier. I was passing through a ward after the Medical officers had left for lunch, and saw a soldier evidently on the confines of the next world refusing some food which an orderly taken out of the regiment was endeavouring to force on him. The man was too weak to speak, but the look of disgust on his face was so strong that I went up to the bed, and asked the orderly, "Why do you give him that black stuff from the inside of the chicken, when you have got half the breast, which he is more likely to fancy?" The soldier said somewhat indignantly, "I was told to give him chicken, and I don't see it matters where he begins." Having told my story, I said, "Now, doctor, let us go to the Hospital, and see how he is." On arriving there we found the patient had died the previous evening.

I was engaged in a lengthy correspondence from March onward, with the Financial Authorities of the War Office. For the nine months I was Acting Governor and High Com-

missioner in South-East Africa I was paid at the rate of £5000 per annum, and although the Colonial Attorney-General advised me I was entitled to Half-Pay on my journey home, that is at the rate of £2500 a year,—the amount drawn from Colonial funds,—I drew nothing, for the Colonial Treasurer told me that as I had never been officially appointed, and was only Acting Governor, I should have troublesome correspondence with the Colony, and the Colonial Office later, if I drew it.

When I resumed the Command at Chatham I asked for my half-pay as a Major-General, from the 22nd December 1881 to the 13th February 1882; but the War Office alleged that as I was in receipt of a Civil salary I was not entitled to any ordinary pay, or to any allowance, on the termination of my Staff appointment. Weeks of correspondence ensued; I tried pleasant words, and then sarcasm, writing I would furnish a certificate from a clergyman that I was alive from the 22nd December to the 13th February, which would entitle me to half-pay in any case, but in vain. I then appealed to Lord Kimberley, and pointed out that as he had expressed satisfaction with my services, I hoped he would point out to the Treasury that I should not be treated as if I had been dead for two months.

His Lordship replied it was impossible for him to do anything except ask the War Office to accord me the most liberal treatment, which he did; nevertheless, there was no result until Mr. Childers helped me on my appealing personally to him. This I was too shy to do, until shortly before Sir Garnet Wolseley's victory at Tel-el-Kebir, in the following September, when an opportunity occurred.[1]

I had many reasons to be grateful to Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen, who invested me shortly after my arrival

[1] The Secretary of State for War telegraphed to me, a small number of soldiers would be sent to strengthen the position in front of Alexandria, about which the Cabinet was apprehensive, and ended with the request, I would mention anything in which I desired help, officially or unofficially; this gave me an opportunity. I replied to the following effect:—"I am greatly obliged for your letter and telegram. I believe there is very little chance of the Egyptians attacking us, but if they do I am confident of defeating them. As a personal request, could you persuade your Department that I was alive from the 22nd December last to the 14th February, which has hitherto been denied, and I have been refused Half-Pay for that period."

I wrote also fully to a similar effect, adding, "I am ashamed to trouble you on a personal matter, but I am more ashamed of the War Office's interminable delays."

with the Grand Cross of St. Michael and St. George, and I went during the following week to stay at Sandhurst, where the Staff College students arranged a Drag hunt over my favourite line, beginning with the two flights of rails in East Hampstead Park. Captain George Gough,[1] 10th Hussars, mounted me on his best horse, which had won the Point to Point race in 1881, and would have probably repeated its victory in 1882, but that the horse Gough rode fell at the rails, and my friend broke a collar bone, so could not get into a saddle.

In the following week I had a kind letter[2] from Sir Vernon Harcourt, offering me the post of Governor of the Isle of Man. I was driving with Her Imperial Majesty the Empress Eugénie, when calling at my club for letters I received the offer, and with her permission read the letter. I had great difficulty in explaining to Her Majesty where the Isle of Man was situated, until I told her in my voluble, but badly pronounced French, it was the Island where the cats had no tails, when she at once understood.

The next few months at Chatham gave me opportunities of seeing many men in whom I was interested, Cardinal Manning coming twice to stay at Government House. He

Mr. Childers was prompt, and long before he got my letter, had a telegram sent to me, "Amount claimed paid to your account at Cox's."

Later, I told Mr. Childers I had addressed his office three times without any result, and without his help I should never have got it, unless, perhaps, my refusal to pay some stoppage accruing in January 1882, on the grounds that I could not pay something out of nothing, brought the case to the notice of a higher placed civilian than he who at that time generally decided such questions, even in the case of claims made by Generals.

[1] *Vide* p. 176.

[2] From the Secretary of State for the Home Department to Sir Evelyn Wood:—

"London, 16*th March* 1882.

"Sir,—Though I have not the honour of your personal acquaintance, the great esteem and admiration which I entertain for the service rendered by you in the course of recent events in South Africa induce me to make to you a proposal for which I have received the sanction of the Commander-in-Chief, and the Secretary of State for War.

"The post of Governor of the Isle of Man is vacant, and if it were agreeable to you, I should be happy to submit your name to the Queen to fill that office. I should not have thought of proposing to so distinguished a soldier as yourself a civil office if I had not ascertained from the Military authorities that the temporary discharge of its duties would form no impediment in the future to your military career.

"Of course, if any considerable command offered itself to you, you would be at liberty to accept it, to cancel it, and rejoin the Government when you pleased.

"(Signed) W. V. Harcourt."

received a very large number of soldiers of the Royal Irish into the Temperance League, and was out on the "Lines," from immediately after dinner till 2 a.m., watching Siege operations.

Major Duncan, who later on commanded the Artillery of the Egyptian Army, and was subsequently Member of Parliament for Finsbury, was mounting heavy guns to open fire at daylight, and the glacis, which was honeycombed from the result of previous excavations, being treacherous, one gun slipped into a deep hole. As the scheme supposed him to be close to the enemy, the work of extricating it, which took five hours, had to be carried on in absolute silence. In spite of the fact that His Eminence's dinner, although he sat out as usual our succession of courses, consisted of some weak tea and two slices of bread and butter, he showed the most unflagging interest in the work, and did not return to Government House until I coaxed him back under the plea that I myself was tired.

On the 4th August I embarked in command of the 4th Brigade of the Expeditionary force on board the steamship *Catalonia*, Her Majesty coming on board to say good-bye to us. She embraced my wife, and was very gracious to me. She had honoured me with a long private interview in July, when I was commanded to Windsor, and treated me with a condescension for the memory of which I shall be ever grateful.

We landed at Alexandria on the 15th August, and went out to Ramleh. I took up my quarters in a convent school, which had prior to the bombardment been vacated by the nuns, and there remained for a day or two until another empty house became available.

Four days later I was a witness of an incident which is so remarkable that most people will have difficulty in believing the story. During the afternoon of the 19th of August, in accordance with orders received from the Divisional General, I made a demonstration with two battalions towards the enemy's lines at Kafr Dowar. I took two companies only within effective range, and few casualties occurred. We had extended the two companies at six paces between men, and were advancing, when the Egyptians getting the range dropped several shell just short, and over the line. One shell fell about 60 yards to my left, and apparently struck down a soldier of the 1st Berkshire Regiment. I saw the flash immediately

in front of his feet, and the man fell headlong. One or two men near him wavered, but on my speaking to them they resumed their places and moved steadily on.

When retiring an hour or so later, we repassed opposite the spot. I was then riding on the bank of the Mahmoudieh Canal, and said to Captain Hemphill, the Adjutant, "Send a stretcher and four men to bring in your man's body." He replied, "The man is in the Ranks, he was not much hurt." "But I saw him struck by a shell; he was killed." "No; he is in the Ranks." "I should like to see him." "Well, you must look at him only in front, sir!" When I overtook the company to which the man belonged I asked for him, and a titter went round, as the man halting, faced me. He had all his clothes on in front, but the shell had burst immediately at his feet, and the flash of the explosion had burnt off the back of his socks, the whole of the back of his trousers, and the skirt of his serge up to the waistbelt; so that from heels to belt he was absolutely naked. He was bleeding from burns on the more protuberant parts up to the waist, but was not permanently injured.

A day or two afterwards, when we were advancing to carry out a similar operation designed to give the Arabists an idea that Sir Garnet meant to make his attack there, the Egyptians fired many shell at us, 5½ inches in diameter, and 15 inches in length. One of these which failed to explode is now in my house, but another fell immediately in front of a section of Fours which was following me, and exploded. Putting up my hand to save my eyes from stones, I turned my face, and looked into the eyes of a young officer of the Berkshire, who delighted me by his naïve avowal. I asked, "A little nervous?" "Very much so indeed, sir;" but he did not show it in his bearing.

When Sir Garnet Wolseley took three Brigades away to Ismailia to attack Arabi at Tel-el-Kebir, I was left to defend a front 5½ miles long, and on a Staff officer pointing out to our Chief that he was taking away every mounted soldier, he observed, "It does not matter, Evelyn Wood is sure to raise some more." This I did, but under some difficulties, for my Divisional General would not without authority from Headquarters sanction the purchase of any saddlery.

In the Derbyshire Regiment then under my command in the City of Alexandria was Lieutenant Smith-Dorrien.[1] By my orders he put fifty saddles together in a shop, and ransacked the Khedive's stables, which had indeed already been drawn on by various Staff officers. Within half an hour of the Divisional General embarking, Smith-Dorrien had collected 15 men, increased in a few days to 30. Many of them had never ridden, but before sundown a section defiled past me at Ramleh, 12 ponies, 2 mules, and a donkey; a somewhat motley detachment, and many of them held on to the saddle, but they proceeded 5 miles farther to the front, and managed to shoot an Egyptian officer that evening, and in five days killed or wounded 12 of the enemy, as they admitted. Three days later Smith-Dorrien had pushed back the Egyptian outposts, and we were not again troubled by the Bedouins looting the houses in Ramleh, as they had done the week before the other Brigade of the Division to which I belonged, embarked.[2]

It was necessary for me to cut down a large grove of Date trees, but I sent for the owner, and paid him the sum awarded by an Arbitrator, himself an Egyptian. It transpired that the owner was delighted, for as every female tree (and it is only the female which bears fruit) paid a yearly tax, the owner got his money based on the number of years before the trees would again bear fruit, and till then had no tax to pay.

Sir Garnet Wolseley, in sending instructions on the 5th of September, to attract the attention of the Egyptians in my front, wrote very kindly, "Your being detained at Alexandria is a sad blow to me, and I know it will be to you." He asked me to send some one into Arabi's lines, and find out the position of his troops. This I did by the help of our Resident, Sir Edward Malet, and furnished Sir Garnet

[1] Now Lieutenant-General H. L. Smith-Dorrien, commanding the Quetta District.

[2] I took the opportunity which Mr. Childers had given me of corresponding with him direct to tell this story, and to urge for an increased expenditure in the training of Mounted Infantry. I pointed out also that in spite of my remonstrances, we had only a Brigade Signaller, and thus when the Divisional Signalling Officer moved off with the General, the 4th Brigade was left without any signalling apparatus, as lamps, heliographs, were all taken away. The sailors put an electric light on the top of a fort on the extreme left of our position, which lit up at night the most vulnerable portion of the approach to the city.

Wolseley with information which he told me later was absolutely accurate.

I telegraphed to him on the 8th of September with reference to the orders I was "not to risk a man," that I proposed to attack three regiments at Mandara, a few miles out from Ramleh, encamped on the spot where Abercromby was killed in 1801. There were 3000 at Kafr Dowar, and I urged that I should be allowed to attack the Mandara Force, to draw the enemy from Kafr Dowar, explaining that I could carry the Mandara position at daylight, and get back to Ramleh by twelve o'clock. He telegraphed to me on the 10th and 11th, "Act on the defensive only, risk nothing."

The Cabinet was anxious at this time, regarding the six battalions as insufficient to defend the frontage of 55 miles, and promised a reinforcement in a fortnight. I replied to Mr. Childers, I did not expect the Egyptians would attack, but if they did so I was confident of defeating them. I could, indeed, have defended it against a force of Egyptians of eight or ten times our numbers; and after a week's labour we opened on the 13th, the day of Sir Garnet's victory at Tel-el-Kebir, the seawall, and thus in a week, had the war continued, a lake would have covered the south, or open front of the city, rendering it secure against Assault.

I was at Chatham again early in November, and on the 8th dined with Mr. Gladstone, in Downing Street, and had an enjoyable evening, in spite of an adverse opinion on his Irish Land Bill, which, however, I gave only on his repeated demand.

The arrangements about going in to dinner were peculiar. In a large party there were only six ladies, and Mr. Gladstone did not take either of them in to the dining-room. Lord Hartington took Mrs. Gladstone, and our host followed his guests from the room in which we assembled. As I was one of the juniors I went to the foot of the table, and Mr. Gladstone followed me, apparently intending to sit next to me, but a Naval officer slipped in between us, and to our host's evident annoyance insisted in talking about what he did in the Egyptian Expedition, from which several of us, including Sir John Adye, who was on my left, had just returned. Mr. Gladstone indicated he wanted to hear nothing more of Egypt, and then turning the conversation asked me to describe the

appearance of John Dunn. From this subject we got accidently on the derivations of words, and when he had mentioned one or two French words in ordinary use in Scotland, I asked him if he had ever noticed the use in Cumberland of the German word "Gerade," pronounced "grade." He was greatly interested, and asked how I came across it. I told him that in 1862 being near Penrith with a Woolwich cadet who was fishing, he asked a lad who had shown him a trout pool in a stream with great success, to show him another. It was eight o'clock, and the child replied, "No, I must go grade home." I made him repeat the word two or three times, until he became angry, thinking I was laughing at him, and then he changed the word, saying, "I must just go straight home." I have never had a more delightful table companion than Mr. Gladstone, and he himself was so eager in telling me about the derivations of various words that he overlooked his dinner.

I was shooting with Redvers Buller at Castle Rising on the 29th November, when I had a flattering letter from Lord Granville,[1] saying that Mr. Gladstone wished me to go out and recreate the Egyptian Army. This was the more complimentary on his part, as I had disagreed with him strongly about his Irish policy.

I went to London, and after a discussion by telegraph with Lord Dufferin, who wished to give me only half the salary I was willing to accept, went out on my own terms. When I reached Cairo, Lord Dufferin told me that although he had used the name of the Egyptian Government, it was he who had tried to get me at a small salary, and three months later he was good enough to say I was cheap at any price.

Chinese Gordon wrote on the 8th of December, when sending me a present of a gold-laced coat which the late Khedive gave to him, "I am *so truly glad* you are going out. For go you will. Remember you are creating there a British contingent." In a P.S. he urged I should be very careful in

[1] Lord Granville to Sir Evelyn Wood:—

"FOREIGN OFFICE, *28th November* 1882.

"It is most important to get the best possible man to be the first of the English officers in the Egyptian service. Everything depends upon it. Should you be willing that I should tell Dufferin you would be available for the post . . .—Yours sincerely, GRANVILLE."

my choice of a Native writer, about which I will later narrate something which happened in 1884.[1]

Just before Christmas I was back again in Cairo, and taking steps to raise the Egyptian Army, which had been disbanded after Tel-el-Kebir.

[1] *Vide* p. 163.

CHAPTER XLI

1883—SIRDAR

I receive £200,000 to create an Army—First Ceremonial Parade in ten weeks—Lord Dufferin's recognition of work—Cholera—Three Britons administer Egypt—Devotion to duty shown by British Officers—Chinese Gordon—Roubi Tewhari—Turks Mutiny—Two shot—Determined conduct of Major Grant.

MY first week in Cairo was spent in conferences with His Highness the Khedive, Lord Dufferin, the principal Ministers of the Khedive who had interests in the Army, and with Sir Auckland Colvin, the Financial adviser of the Government.

As regards the creation of an Army I had an absolutely free hand, being informed by Lord Dufferin that I might do anything I liked, provided I did not spend more than £200,000. This sum, however, was to include the pay of officers, Europeans and Turks, or Egyptians, and the pay and rations of the men, but not the upkeep of barracks and hospital arrangements, which were provided by other Departments. I was told to select uniforms, and was later given a sum to buy Field artillery, and to replace the Remington rifle, by the pattern in use in the British Army.

I had put the conscription arrangements in motion immediately on my arrival, and within a fortnight got the first recruits, and had set the officers to work in creating and training the Force which has since proved to be a satisfactory instrument for war. I had obtained the services of 25 officers, of whom the following have risen in the Army:—Major Fraser, Royal Engineers,[1] Chief Staff officer; Captain Slade,[2] as Aide-de-Camp, replacing him on arrival by Stuart Wortley,[3] when Slade went to work

[1] Now Major-General Sir Thomas Fraser, K.C.B.
[2] Major-General F. Slade, C.B.
[3] Colonel the Honourable E. Stuart Wortley, D.S.O.

under Fraser. Somewhat later I got Lieutenant Wingate,[1] Royal Artillery; Major Grenfell[2] commanded a brigade of four battalions, each of which had three British officers. The first battalion was organised and commanded by Captain Chermside;[3] the 2nd Battalion by Captain Holled Smith;[4] the 3rd Battalion by Captain Parr;[5] the 4th, by Major Wynne.[6] Major Duncan[7] commanded the Artillery, the English Batteries of which were commanded by Lieutenant Wodehouse,[8] Lieutenant Rundle,[9] and somewhat later by Lieutenant Parsons.[10] Captain Kitchener[11] was second in command of the Cavalry Regiment. Captains H. S. Smith-Dorrien[12] and Archibald Hunter[13] joined later.

There was an Infantry Brigade under a Turkish General, Schudi Pasha. There were no Engineers, and no Departmental Corps.

The men conscripted were in physique superior to any European army, and their aptitude for the perfunctory parts of drill was remarkable. Their progress was indeed so rapid that the Khedive's guard at the Abdin Palace was taken over from British troops on the 14th February. Two days later, on parade of all troops then available, I returned £9 which had been given to a doctor to induce him to say a recruit was unfit for the service, and awarded the recruit twenty-one days' imprisonment for offering bribes.

On the 31st March we had our first parade, before the Khedive, Lord Dufferin, all the Ministers, and a large crowd, including all the European residents in Cairo. The cavalry were not fit to do more than "keep the ground," which was

[1] Major-General Sir F. R. Wingate, K.C.B., K.C.M.G., D.S.O., Sirdar.
[2] General the Right Honourable Lord Grenfell, G.C.B., G.C.M.G.
[3] Major-General Sir H. C. Chermside, G.C.M.G., C.B., Late Governor of Queensland.
[4] Major-General Sir C. Holled Smith, K.C.M.G., C.B.
[5] Major-General Hallam Parr, C.B.
[6] Lieutenant-General A. Wynne, C.B.
[7] Colonel-Duncan, later M.P. for Finsbury.
[8] Lieutenant-General J. H. Wodehouse, C.B., C.M.G.
[9] Lieutenant-General Sir Leslie Rundle, K.C.B.
[10] Major-General Sir C. Parsons, K.C.M.G.
[11] General Lord Kitchener, G.C.B., Commander-in-Chief in India.
[12] Lieutenant-General H. S. Smith-Dorrien, C.B., D.S.O.
[13] Lieutenant-General Sir Archibald Hunter, K.C.B., D.S.O.

done by some of the men who had learned enough to remain on their horses. The artillery had made most progress, but that Arm was the best before Arabi's rebellion, and we had kept several of the officers, and some of the non-commissioned officers came back voluntarily; moreover, the men were conscripted in Upper Egypt, and all such are more virile than the Delta Fellaheen. I showed eight battalions, and four batteries after six weeks' instruction, and they marched past in the stereotyped Aldershot fashion.

Schudi Pasha, the Egyptian Brigadier, had been educated in Berlin, and as Major Grenfell knew some German, it happened that the few orders I, as Commander of the Force, had to give on the ceremonial parade were spoken in the one language common to my Brigadiers, *i.e.* German; Schudi giving his words in Arabic; Grenfell, in English; and the four English Commanders in Turkish, as was the custom in the Egyptian Army. This I endeavoured to alter, but the Arabic language does not lend itself to the sharp monosyllables, which are most suitable for getting men to move with clock-like regularity.

Major Wynne not only compiled a Clothing warrant and Signalling manual, but also took in hand our Drill book, and Lieutenant Mantle, Royal Engineers, who was an accomplished Arabic scholar, put as much of it as I thought necessary into Arabic. By a strange coincidence, in 1887, Wynne, then in the War Office, followed my precedent and reduced the English Drill book by cutting out many superfluous exercises, which were appropriate to the movements practised before rifles were used. The Code Napoleon put into Arabic did not deal with some crimes common in the East, and so the Army Discipline Act of 1881, with the Khedive's name substituted for our Queen's, became in Arabic, our penal Code.

Lord Dufferin supported me most thoroughly, but while fully satisfied, warned me before he left, early in May, that I was working the officers too hard, and this was probably accurate.[1] Before his lordship departed he asked me to hand

[1] Lord Dufferin to Sir Evelyn Wood:—

"CAIRO, 1*st May* 1883.

"Before quitting Egypt I cannot help expressing to you in the warmest terms I can command my appreciation of the extraordinary energy you have exhibited in the creation of the Egyptian Army.

"Though not a military man, I am quite capable of understanding the in-

back £10,000 in the first instance, and then another £10,000, but this latter sum I gave up provisionally on the understanding that I could reclaim it if necessary. I did not do so, spending thus in my first year only £180,000.

Colonel Hicks, who arrived at Cairo from India in January, had gone to Khartoum, and the following June, having telegraphed for reinforcements, the Ministers collected soldiers who had served in and prior to the Egyptian outbreak in 1882, and I was directed by the Premier, Cherif Pasha, to inspect them, and pass for service only such as I considered fit. Out of the first thousand I felt bound to reject over six hundred, and those who were not rejected, being aware that few Egyptians ever returned from Khartoum, were most unwilling to go, two men actually putting lime into their eyes to destroy their sight while on parade. These poor creatures who preferred life without eyesight in the Delta to probable death in the Sudan, were the fathers and uncles of those whom we were to teach to take a pride in themselves, and in the Army.

I limited the term of service, and gave every soldier a furlough as soon as he was reported to be efficient. When the first contingent of 2000 men received railway passes to their villages, I was assured by the Cairenes that few would return, but every man returned punctually. I introduced a postal order system, and the soldiers remitted home a portion of their pay, 2½d. a day. Later, when Hallam Parr asked for six soldiers to go with him to the Sudan, his whole battalion stepped forward.

We drilled five days a week, for the Moslems kept Friday as their Day of Rest, and I insisted on Sunday being kept as such. My action was based on the firm conviction formed in India, twenty years earlier, from my intimate knowledge of natives, that, putting one's own feelings aside, it is an error

numerable difficulties you have had to encounter. I am sure it will be a satisfaction to you to know that the success of your efforts is recognised by everyone, by the Khedive, by his Ministers, and by the Egyptian colony, as well as by Her Majesty's Government. The justice, the humanity, and the consideration with which you have treated your men have already changed the point of view from which the Native regards Military service, and all your countrymen are proud to think of the effect your character and conduct have produced upon all who have come into contact with you.—Yours sincerely, DUFFERIN."

to allow any soldiers to believe that their officers are without Religion.

I worked from daylight to 5 p.m. every week-day, when I played polo three times a week, and on the other days lawn tennis, one hour a day being devoted to the study of the Arabic language. Being an interpreter in Hindustani the characters presented no difficulty, but my desire to learn Arabic grammatically was damped when I saw there were seven hundred irregular conjugations.

I kept myself by regular exercise in tolerable health, but in June slight attacks of fever became more frequent, and His Highness the Khedive gave me leave to proceed to England for two months. In the middle of July I left for Suez, to catch a homeward-bound steamer; Grenfell and the officers commanding units saw me off, and out of mistaken kindness forbore to mention there had been a case of cholera in the barracks at Abbassieh the previous night. When I got to Zagazig the stationmaster told me there were several cases in Cairo, so I telegraphed to the Khedive, that I should not be out of the canal for three days, and trusted he would recall me if the cholera became Epidemic in the army, adding that whether he telegraphed or not, if I were not satisfied, I should return from Port Said. I was intercepted, however, by a launch sent after me, shortly after we passed Ismailia, and finding a special train waiting for me, reached Cairo twenty-four hours after leaving it.

The Khedive and his Ministers went to Alexandria, and Sir Edward Malet, Valentine Baker Pasha, and I practically ruled Egypt during the Epidemic. Strong measures were necessary, for some of the Egyptian authorities had established a cholera camp on the Nile, immediately above the intake of the Cairo waterworks, and it was difficult to induce adequate sanitary arrangements amongst a people who are by religion, and by inclination, Fatalists. The losses in the army were not very great, and they had the inestimable advantage of attaching the Fellaheen soldiery to the British officer. The Egyptian officer, except in some few instances, did not show to advantage.

His Highness the Khedive returned from Alexandria without his Ministers when the cholera became serious, and

calling at my house at six o'clock in the morning, asked me to take him over the hospitals, which we had organised under Captain Rogers[1] of the Army Medical Department. The Khedive, whatever he felt, behaved well, but the senior Egyptian officers would not go near the hospitals, much less the patients, except with a surrounding of drugs, supposed to be prophylactics, and an Egyptian resented my rebuke for his sending a soldier still alive to the mortuary, saying, "He will be dead in a few minutes."

The British officer not only nursed the cholera-stricken patients day and night, performing every menial service, but in many cases washed the corpses prior to interment. Lieutenant Chamley Turner, in spite of having only slight colloquial knowledge of the language, so endeared himself to the stricken men of his camel Company that several of them when dying threw their arms round his neck. He must have infused some of his spirit into his men, for General Brackenbury wrote, dated 4.2.85, "The Egyptian Company is doing invaluable service."

When the Epidemic was nearly over, Turner[2] contracted the disease, and I had him brought to my house, where he soon recovered under the skilled attention of Dr. Rogers and the careful nursing of Walkinshaw.

From the cholera time, on, the Fellaheen soldier trusted the British Officer.[3]

By the middle of August the cholera had died out, and I went to England for two months, keeping up my study of Arabic on the voyage, assisted by Mrs. Watson, the wife of an officer whom I had got out as Surveyor-General, or Chief

[1] Now Colonel Sir John Rogers, K.C.B.

[2] He had shown remarkable courage at Tokar, Eastern Sudan, and was drowned later in the Nile.

[3] Extract: Sir E. Malet to Earl Granville:—

"CAIRO, 11*th August* 1883.

"I cannot forward Sir Evelyn's report on the cholera Epidemic among the Egyptian troops at Cairo, without adding a word to record the high admiration which the conduct of the English officers towards their men has elicited. Sir Evelyn Wood and his Staff, and all the officers, have worked night and day at the measures necessary to ward off and mitigate the disease, and their efforts have met with an almost unhoped-for success. Beyond the immediate benefit of the saving of life which they have obtained, an example has been given of Self-devotion which may have lasting consequences for good in the promotion of respect and regard of the men towards the officers."

business man. His wife knew the language well, although mainly self-taught.

Her Majesty the Queen was graciously pleased to command me to stay at Balmoral, and took much interest in the Egyptian army. I visited Lord Granville at Walmer, at his request, on my way back to Egypt, for the question was then constantly discussed as to whether the British Garrison could be withdrawn. I undertook to maintain order with the eight Egyptian battalions only as far as the internal peace of the country was concerned, but probably all the British troops would have been withdrawn had not the events at Khartoum in the following year enforced on us the permanent occupation.

In the summer of 1883 I was directed to ask the Turkish Pasha who had been serving at Khartoum if he would return there as Governor; and his observations in refusing—on Englishmen putting Turks in posts of danger—were so unpleasant that I offered Nubar Pasha to go up myself. This he declined, and then having made the offer, I told him I thought the decision was wise, as I was doing good work in Cairo, where several of the Egyptian officers knew me, and in Khartoum I should only be as any other officer.

In the third week of November we heard rumours, afterwards confirmed, of the annihilation of 10,000 men under Hicks Pasha, near El Obeid. Early in the month, and just before Christmas, Osman Digna, a powerful Slave dealer in the Eastern Sudan, routed Baker Pasha at El Teb on the Red Sea, killing two-thirds of his Force of Constabulary, composed of old soldiers discharged from the Army in 1882.

I was vilified in the British Press for not having sent rifles to Suakin when they were demanded by Baker Pasha, in order that he might arm "Friendlies," but I had nothing to do with the decision, which was taken by the Egyptian Government and the Consul-General in Council, and I merely obeyed orders in sending the telegram; but in fact there were at the time 2000 stand of rifles in store at Suakin. I took no notice of these attacks, which had been, as I was told later by one of my traducers who fell fighting bravely at Abu Klea, made for Political purposes. But when Sir Stafford Northcote, in moving a vote of censure on the Government, doubtless in perfect good faith, made several mis-statements: (*a*) That Sir

Evelyn Wood was answerable for Hicks Pasha's army. (*b*) That Sir Evelyn Wood refused to send the newly raised army to Khartoum, stating that he could not do so, as the British Government contemplated withdrawing from Egypt, and other such erroneous allegations, I wrote a letter, through the Foreign Office, which was published later in the Press: (*a*) That I had nothing at the time to do with the troops in the Sudan. (*b*) That I had never given Hicks Pasha any such information as alleged, for indeed I did not know the intention of the Government. I further explained that my only intervention in Sudan affairs was, at the request of Colonel Hicks, to induce the Finance Department in Cairo to send him money; while I at the same time, unasked, expressed to the War Minister the strongest opinion against the contemplated advance into Kordofan, where later the Pasha and his 10,000 men were annihilated.

The situation in the Sudan having become worse, Gordon Pasha offered to go up to extricate the garrisons. He telegraphed decidedly that he would not pass through Cairo, travelling to Khartoum via Suakin and Berber, and on the 23rd January the Resident sent me to Port Said, to induce him to go up the Nile after paying his respects to His Highness the Khedive.

My friend Captain Briscoe, commanding the mail steamer which brought Gordon from Brindisi, on my going on board bet me that I should fail to get Gordon to go through Cairo; but he did not know his character as well as I did, and Briscoe lost the bet.

Gordon had telegraphed to Colonel Evelyn Baring[1] that he wished to have Roubi Tewhari, a blind ex-clerk sent to him, and that a certain officer should be promoted to the rank of Colonel, and sent to him. Our Consul-General told me to arrange it, but I exclaimed that, though I could find the ex-clerk, I scarcely liked to ask the Khedive not only to take the Captain out of prison, for he had been an ardent Arabist and was still undergoing punishment, but at the same time to make him a Colonel. His Highness, however, was good enough to release him, and we let the question of his promotion stand over.

[1] Now Lord Cromer.

When I explained to Gordon that it was undesirable that he should go to Khartoum as the Khedive's Representative without seeing him, he at once agreed to go to Cairo with me. During our journey in the train he told me an interesting story.[1] Pointing to Roubi Tewhari, who sat in the saloon carriage with us, he said: "You see that man? He was my confidential clerk in Darfour. I trusted him implicitly, and believed in his honesty. One day I was told on authority I could not doubt that he had been levying fines, and receiving large sums of money—in one case £3000, which as he alleged went into my pocket: taxed with this wickedness, he admitted it with tears, and I said to him: "You villain, go back to El Obeid." Tewhari replied: "Have mercy on me; I have lost one eye in your service, and if you send me to that hot dusty place the other eye will suffer." "Whether it suffers or not, you shall go there as a punishment for your conduct."

Gordon taking £300, in notes of £10, out of his pocket said: "This is the only money I have in the world, and my sister found some of it for me, but I am going to give ten of these notes to Tewhari," and crossing over the carriage he put the notes into the blind man's hand. Gordon's Arabic, although intelligible, was not fluent, and it was not for a considerable time that Tewhari understood his former master's generosity, and the value of the paper money.

We reached Cairo at 9.30, p.m., and after dinner called on the Consul-General, with whom we sat till the early hours of the morning, returning again after breakfast. Gordon had accepted the task of evacuating the garrisons of the Sudan without financial aid, but eventually agreed to receive £100,000, of which he left £60,000 at Berber, and this I fear to some extent precipitated the tragedy enacted a year later; for the Mudir of Berber coveted the money and played Gordon false.

Early next day Roubi Tewhari, the blind man, sent to me an Arabic-speaking English officer, who had been with Gordon at Khartoum in 1874. The gist of Tewhari's petition was as follows: "I behaved badly to Gordon Pasha many years ago, and he banished me to El Obeid, where I lost my remaining eye. He has now given me more money than I can spend in my life, and I am going to Mecca, where I shall

[1] *Vide* page 154.

pray for his welfare in this world and in the next, until I die. Gordon Pasha is bent on having Zebehr sent up to Khartoum with him. Gordon's trustful nature will certainly undo him, and I implore everyone who loves Gordon as I do, not to allow Zebehr to go to Khartoum while Gordon is there. Whatever Gordon may say, do not let Zebehr go to Khartoum with Gordon. Send Gordon, or Zebehr, but not the two at the same time."

I do not know what influence, if any, this honest heartfelt request, passed on by me to Sir Evelyn Baring, made on the British Cabinet, but Tewhari's advice coincided with that of Sir Henry Gordon, Charles's brother. Zebehr remained in Cairo, in spite of the continuous carping in the Press at the decision of Government.

We spent all the next day at the Resident's house, where Gordon and Zebehr had animated and dramatic interviews. In 1879 a Court-Martial, assembled by Gordon's orders, had condemned Zebehr, who was then in Cairo litigating with a former Governor-General, to death. As a result of the facts brought out by the Court-Martial, Gordon confiscated Zebehr's property.

Now, in 1884, Zebehr accused Gordon of causing the death of his son Suleiman, and alleged that the confiscation was equally unjust. Gordon was in Abyssinia when Suleiman was executed, after a sentence of a Court-Martial approved by Gessi Pasha, Governor-General of the Sudan, in pursuance of instructions issued by Gordon, while he was Governor-General, that if found guilty Suleiman was to be executed.

I drove Gordon after dinner to the station on the Nile. On leaving the dining-room he said good-bye to Lady Wood, going upstairs to kiss my children, who were in bed. As he left the house he took off his evening-coat, and handing it to Walkinshaw, said: "I should like you to keep this, for I shall never wear an evening-coat again." A month later, however, in thanking officially an officer who was returning to Cairo, Gordon wrote: "There is not the least chance of any danger being now incurred in Khartoum,—a place as safe as Kensington Park."

At the Consul-General's request I now took charge of the Sudan Bureau, and became his Staff officer for Political affairs of the Red Sea Littoral to Massowah, which made my work

heavy. Rising at daylight, I generally saw some military work at Abbassieh or elsewhere, and waited on Nubar Pasha at 9 a.m., always visiting the Consul-General, and often the General in Command of British troops, on my way to the War Office, where I remained till about four o'clock, when I played Polo or Tennis till night fell.

A Division of British troops under Sir Gerald Graham was sent to Suakin in February, and, after defeating Osman Digna at El Teb and Tamai, was recalled at the end of March, a Force of all Arms of the Egyptian Army holding Suakin.

The former Egyptian Army had suffered continuous defeats, accompanied either with annihilation or heavy loss, from 1875–6, when 11,000 were destroyed in Abyssinia. I consistently[1] urged that until the recollection of these disasters had been at least partially effaced by a victory, the Fellaheen soldier should not be allowed to fight without a

[1] Telegram—Evelyn Wood to Gordon Pasha, Khartoum :—

"*April 19th*, 1884.

(Extract): "Fifthly: I would give anything to be allowed to go up to Khartoum by river with British and Egyptian troops when the Nile rises, but I fear I may not be so fortunate as to get the chance, and, I gather from your telegrams in March, you think Egyptians are useless. I think that, considering about two-thirds have four months' service, and one-third three months only, they would do fairly well with British troops, or in fighting defensive actions. I could not recommend they should take the field without British support."

The gradual restoration of confidence, coupled with the brilliant example of the Sudanese Battalions, so encouraged the Fellaheen that General Sir Herbert Kitchener wrote to me: "Cairo, *17th February* 1888.—I hope my wound will soon be healed up. The Egyptian troops with me behaved splendidly, and were quite steady under fire, which was pretty hot at one time. If I had had more of them I could have cleared out the Dervishes. The Irregulars got quite out of hand."

Ten years later there were some remarkable instances of the change effected in the spirit of the Fellaheen.

On the 9th April 1898, Captain Hickman, with two troops of Cavalry, intercepted, near the Southern end of the Second Cataract (Wadi Halfa), a raiding party of Dervishes, mostly mounted on horses and camels, under the command of Emir Wad Rahma, driving off a number of looted cattle. Hickman charged home in the centre, his men fighting hand to hand, killing all except two horsemen, who escaped, and eight prisoners whose lives were spared. The Emir resisted with desperate courage, until a trooper, dismounting, literally jumped on and slew him.

Half a Battalion 16th Regiment, 300 men (Fellaheen), in September 1898, in a force under Colonel Parsons, near Gedareff, repeated the manœuvre for which the 28th Gloucester Regiment wears a double fore and hind peak to its head-dress, and alone successfully resisted a determined simultaneous attack in Front and Rear. As the Dervishes came on the Rear Rank faced about, and both attacks were repulsed.

backing of British troops. This was eventually approved, but not until after my retirement from the Command.

Early in 1884 I began to raise a battalion of Turks, mainly enlisted in Anatolia. They were paid five times the amount of the Fellaheen conscripts, and promised to fight any number of the Mahdi's soldiers.

When, however, the first Company was ordered up the Nile it mutinied, stopping the train by firing at the engine-driver, and made off in various directions. Major Grant,[1] 4th Hussars, who was in command of the Cadre battalion, riding to where the train had been held up, accompanied by one Egyptian policeman, came on seven of the mutineers in a serai or public Rest-house. Grant dismounting outside the enclosure, found the seven men cooking, their rifles piled in the courtyard. As he called to them to surrender and lie down, the ringleader fired at Grant, while the other men rushed towards their arms. Grant shot at and wounded the ringleader and another, which so cowed the other five that they obeyed his order to lie down, and Grant stood over them until the Sergeant, having tied up the two horses, came in and carried away their rifles, later assisting to bind the prisoners.

The ringleaders were tried by a general Court-Martial, presided over by a Turkish General, assisted by English officers, and seven mutineers were sentenced to death. I examined the cases carefully, with a view of carrying out the sentences only in such cases as appeared to be absolutely necessary, and at once eliminated from the condemned soldiers a youth, seventeen years of age, whose father had fired at Major Grant. I saw the condemned men, and was satisfied in my own mind that one of them was practically unaccountable for his actions; and eventually, after a consultation with the members of the Court-Martial, decided that two only should suffer death.

Lieutenant-General Sir Frederick Stephenson,[2] knowing that all the trained soldiers for the Egyptian Army were at

[1] Now General Grant, C.B.

[2] I heard later, in reply to various inquiries from Pall Mall as to whether I had not been unduly severe, he replied that he had the fullest confidence in my sense of justice.

Suakin, or on the Nile, the Depôt Companies in Cairo, consisting of men who had just been conscripted, kindly offered me assistance, but I determined to make the Egyptian recruits carry out the execution.

I asked for precedents in the Egyptian Army, and was told that at the last Military execution, the feet of the men condemned being tied, they were ordered to stand up at 400 yards distance, and a line of soldiers advanced on them firing, with the shocking results that can be readily understood. I had recently read the trial of a Neapolitan soldier, Misdea, who was shot while sitting in a chair, and arranged the execution on similar lines. The previous evening I sent the lad of seventeen away to a guard-room of the British Army of Occupation, as I did not wish him to hear the volley which was to kill his father, but, as will be seen later, my sympathetic consideration was unnecessary.

When I rode out next morning and met the procession marching to the place of execution, which was an incomplete barrack at Abbassieh, I was nearly ill from nervousness, but on arriving at the actual spot, when I had to give orders, the feeling passed off, the scene affecting me no more than any ordinary duty. Ten Egyptian recruit soldiers being told off for each of the condemned Turks, advanced close behind them, and at the word of command the mutineers ceased to exist.

I had some trouble after the sentence became known, for the Prime Minister sent for me, and said there was considerable feeling about Turks being executed by order of Christians. I pointed out that a Turkish General had presided over the Court-Martial, when the Minister said: "Well, do what you like; only, do not ask me or the Khedive to approve of it."

A day later he called on me to say that the Persian Minister claimed one of the condemned men, and wished to know what answer was to be given to him. I said: "Excellency, tell him 'Bukra'[1] (to-morrow)." And when that morrow came I wrote a note saying that the Persian Minister could now claim the man's body. I was then assured that it was a matter of no consequence.

[1] The invariable answer in the East, where nobody does anything to-day that can be left till to-morrow.

A few hours after the execution I sent for the son of the ringleader, and told him that his punishment had been commuted to imprisonment, but as he was so young, and it would distress him to serve under officers who had shot his father, I gave him £5 and told him to go back to Anatolia. The youth reappeared three days later, and said he much preferred to serve on; indeed, he thought less of the execution than I did.

The mutiny of the Turks was followed by that of two battalions which had been raised by Zebehr in the Delta for Baker Pasha, and some of these were condemned to death. I doubted their guilty intentions, although there was no doubt as to their overt acts, and commuted their sentence to service in the Eastern Sudan. I visited the men at their request a few days later, when the interpreter said: "They say, in olden times when soldiers went away for a long time, as is to be our case, they always had an advance of pay,—may we please have it?" This confirmed my impression that they had very little idea of how we regarded their conduct.

CHAPTER XLII

1884–5—THE SUDAN

Good work of British Officers—A cheery adviser—Arthur Wynne's determination—Father Brindle—Life in the Gakdul Desert—Walkinshaw's devotion—Fortitude of Mounted Infantry—Aden camel men—General Dormer's cheery nature—I am invalided.

IN the middle of August I followed the Egyptian troops up the Nile, where most of them had been since February, the balance of trained soldiers being at Suakin. At that place they came under the direct command of General Freemantle, who wrote to me in the most eulogistic terms of the work they had done, and on their steadiness on outpost duty. Colonel Duncan had got excellent work out of those on the Nile; they had fortified Korosko, Assuan, and Philæ. Here again I prefer to quote the words of the British officers, who certainly were not prepossessed in favour of the Fellaheen soldiery. Major Clarke, an officer sent from India, to act as Director of Railways, wrote officially: "The amount of work done on the railway by the 4th Battalion Egyptian Army (Colonel Wynne)[1] is simply prodigious." Lord Charles Beresford,[2] who was acting as Director of work on the Cataracts, wrote: "The way in which the 2nd Battalion (Smith's)[3] works the portage, carrying the whalers over the rocks for a thousand yards, is marvellous." It was somewhat galling for the British officers serving in the Egyptian Army to read in the Press that the sailors were carrying the whalers,

[1] Some officers, seeing little chance of promotion to be gained by serving in the Egyptian Army, got employment on the British Army Staff. I offered Colonel Wynne such a post, but he declined, saying: "I have a definite Command, and feel bound to hold it until the Expedition returns Northwards."

[2] Now Admiral Commander-in-Chief, Mediterranean.

[3] Now Major-General Sir Holled Smith, K.C.B.

for they never had any opportunity of doing so, and 609 out of 700 were carried by the 2nd Battalion Egyptian Army round the First Cataract.

Lord Wolseley, nominated to command the Gordon Relief Expedition while still on the sea, wrote me a very flattering letter asking me to accept the position of General of the Line of Communications, saying: "It is a most difficult, arduous, and responsible task, which I hope you will accept, as I feel sure that you will do it with credit to yourself and greatly to the advantage of the Service, and there is no doubt that on the manner in which this duty is performed will depend the success of the undertaking."

Long before I received my former Chief's kind letter he telegraphed its purport to me, and I, accepting his offer within ten minutes, he telegraphed again: "Your telegram has relieved my mind of a great trouble. Can you put some of your men on to the railway?" I replied: "You can confidently reckon on my cheerfully carrying out any duty you assign to me." On receipt of his letter on the 25th September I telegraphed: "Am taking every precaution to accelerate the transport by water, paying premiums for quick passages North of Halfa, and South of that place I have an Egyptian non-commissioned officer travelling in every native vessel.[1] I have got every man, except a guard of three per battalion, on railway work or portages." Lord Wolseley annexed the horses of the Egyptian Cavalry Regiment, and with reference to that order I, while expressing the pain it caused our officers, added, "but you may have the fullest confidence we shall all do our best to make the expedition a success." The one great factor of the good work done was the Arabic-speaking British officers, and their power of influencing the men.

Lord Wolseley, in appointing me General of the Line of Communications, reversed the previous decision of the War Minister who replied to my application for service at Suakin, when Sir Gerald Graham went there in January 1884, that, being in the Egyptian army, I could not be employed in command of British troops. As I then pointed out to the Commander-in-Chief, had I realised these conditions in 1882 I

[1] I had purchased every Native cargo vessel working on the Nile, north of Merowi.

should never have accepted Lord Granville's offer of the task of raising an Egyptian Army.

Early in September I disagreed with a gifted Naval officer who had charge of the Naval transport on the subject of putting steamers through the Second Cataract. He declared there was considerable risk for the steamers, and some for the crew, and demurred to my order that he should try it. We referred the point to the British General in Cairo, and to the Admiral, who replied that the officer was to "do his best to carry out my wishes, bearing in mind that, after stating his professional opinion, Sir Evelyn Wood was to be wholly responsible for what might happen to either steamers, officers, or men." Captain Lord Charles Beresford[1] was a much more cheery adviser. When I asked: "Will she go through?" said, "What sort of a hawser?" "Big steel." "How many darkies?" "Any number up to six thousand." "Well, sir, she must go through, or leave her bottom in it." The ship with several others went through the Cataract, in spite of all predictions to the contrary, but it is fair to observe that both paddle wheels were simultaneously on the rocks on either side, and when they reached the still waters up stream of the Cataract there was very little paddle wheel left intact.

Lord Wolseley and the Head Quarter Staff arrived at Halfa on the 5th October, stayed the greater part of a month, and then preceded me to Dongola. I worked from daylight to sunset throughout this month passing supplies, and later troops, up the river, storing 42,000 British rations at Dongola, before any Europeans went South of Halfa.

As General officer commanding on the Lines of Communication, it was my privilege to entertain a great number of the stream of officers who passed through Wadi Halfa. I was riding one evening, before the Camel battery under Captain Norton left for the Southward, and was so surprised to observe an officer turn away his head as I passed that I rode back to ascertain the reason; he had one eye bandaged, and saying he was suffering from slight ophthalmia, admitted he had turned away lest I, seeing his state, might prevent his going on with

[1] Now Admiral Lord Charles Beresford, G.C.B., Commander-in-Chief of the Mediterranean Fleet.

the battery. I reassured him by saying I was too sympathetic to think of stopping anyone from going to fight. He was mortally wounded at Abu Klea on the 19th January 1885.

The militant spirit Lieutenant Guthrie showed was amusingly illustrated later by one of the gunners in the battery. When the square at Abu Klea was penetrated by the Dervishes, one of them attempted to spear a gunner who was in the act of ramming home a charge. The Briton brained the Sudanee, but the rammer head split on the man's hard skull. Next day the gunner was sent for; mistaking the reason, and knowing from experience soldiers are charged for Government property they break, he led off: "Please, sir, I'm very sorry I broke the rammer, but I never thought the nigger's head could be so hard. I'll pay for the rammer so as to hear no more of the case."

Before I left Wadi Halfa for the front Lord Wolseley entrusted to me for decision, as an Arbitrator, a claim by a contractor for services rendered, amounting to £42,000. The claimant, a public-spirited man of business, admitted some rebate should be made, as owing to change of plans his servants had done less than either party had contemplated, but suggested about £6000 would be a reasonable sum. I urged the Principal to come up himself for a personal interview, but he alleged pressure of work would not allow of his doing so, and he and the Commander-in-Chief, for the War Office, accepted my award of £29,000.

We had taken many camels off the Supply duties in order to assist Colonel Wynne's Egyptian battalion in carrying the frame of the *Lotus*, a Stern wheeler, which we desired to put together and launch above the Cataract at Semneh. The beams of steel being very heavy, were troublesome in transport, for if the two camels on which they were placed rose at different moments, the girders either slipped backwards or forwards, occasionally fracturing a camel's legs. All the riveters of the "Black Watch" and "Gordon Highlanders" were employed for a month in putting the *Lotus* together; she was ready when I passed, and instructed the Naval officer in charge to proceed.

Half a mile in front was an ugly belt of rocks, which extended, indeed, for 80 miles south of Wadi Halfa, and from a

look in the Naval officer's face I turned back and said: "Now, while I should regret the loss of the steamer, please understand I would prefer she should lie at the bottom rather than you did not try to get through." "Yes, I understand." "Would you like to have it in writing?" "No, I understand you accept all responsibility."

Nevertheless, as I travelled up the Nile, at each successive telegraph station I received telegrams more and more pessimistic from the officer commanding the *Lotus*, and eventually he declined the task. Colonel Wynne,[1] who was the Station Staff-officer on the Line of Communication, telegraphed at the same time: "I have seen the Naval officer's opinion, and while I agree there is danger, request permission to order the Blue-jackets and Voyageurs off the steamer, and let me take her through hauled by Egyptian soldiers." This he did; the *Lotus* proved to be worth her weight in gold to us in bringing down stream wounded and sick soldiers.[2]

When I was riding up the Nile the Consul-General in Cairo asked me my wishes about retaining command of the Egyptian Army, assuming that reductions then contemplated were carried out; and I replied, on the 10th December, that I wished to remain until Khartoum was taken, but afterwards not to remain on any terms.

Father Brindle[3] was travelling up in the boats of the Royal Irish, and I had determined, if it were possible, to overtake him and give him a Christmas dinner. We crossed to the left bank of the Nile, where the whalers moored, and were waiting, when the leading boat of the Irish appeared, the Reverend Father pulling stroke oar. His features were burnt by the sun, and, like his hands, were covered with blisters, as he stepped out of the boat stiff with the fatigue of pulling against the fast-running stream. Said I: "Father, why are you working like that?" "Oh, to encourage them." "Any result?" "Very little." The fact being, that the ordinary human creature was not endowed with the same energy and devotion

[1] Now commanding at Colchester.

[2] Captain Lord Charles Beresford, to chief of Staff, 10th December 1884: "Colonel Wynne's organisation here is perfect. I suggest he be made Captain of Cataracts. . . . Do not see any chance of a block here if all is left to Wynne."

[3] Now Roman Catholic Bishop of Nottingham.

as was my friend. Nevertheless the battalion won Lord Wolseley's prize of £100 for the best time, from Wadi Halfa to Korti, and smallest loss of Supplies.

Father Brindle was doubtless the most popular man in the Expedition. His own flock naturally loved him, and he was respected by everyone, from Bugler to Lord Wolseley, who more than once tried to get him knighted. He had a pony which he never rode, it being used to carry foot-sore men in turn. Preaching one day in the desert during Lent, he said: "Now, my men, I cannot ask you here on Service to abstain, but you might do something which would be pleasing to the Almighty, and will gratify me,—abstain from the use of bad language." Looking into the upturned faces, he thought from their sympathetic expression he had effected some good. When the parade was dismissed he stood for a few minutes speaking to some officers, and ten minutes later, walking behind two of his recent congregation, who, talking eagerly did not notice his footsteps on the soft sand, he overheard one say: "Bill, that was a bloody fine sermon the Father gave us."

When Lord Wolseley heard at Korti that General Sir Herbert Stewart was dangerously wounded he sent Sir Redvers Buller across the Bayuda Desert to replace him, and I became Chief of the Staff, General Grenfell replacing me on the Line of Communication. A few days later Lord Wolseley heard that Gordon had been killed at Khartoum; and the accounts he received from the troops on the Nile at Metemmeh being unsatisfactory, he despatched me as his Representative, with instructions, after consulting with Buller, to order a retirement if it seemed to be necessary.

I started within an hour, although I was in pain, for two days previously I had sat down in a fold-up chair with my finger between the joints, crushing the top so that it was in a jelly-like condition. The arm was in a sling, and it is difficult to get on a camel, which puts its head back and tries to take a piece out of your leg as you mount, if you have only one hand. I reached Gakdul, however, on the 18th February, to find that Sir Redvers and his column were then returning from Abu Klea.

There was no longer any hope of further offensive opera-

tions. Although 2200 camels had crossed the desert on the first journey, the Heavy Cavalry Regiment had now only 22 riding and 10 baggage camels. The Light Cavalry Regiment was 100 short, and the transport animals had all died from overwork.

Buller went on to rejoin Lord Wolseley on the Nile, while I remained at Gakdul until sunset on the 3rd March, clearing out the sick and wounded, then ammunition, and last of all stores.[1] We remained until the whole of the water in the big pools had been exhausted, and had men 30 feet down in wells, bailing up water in pannikins, to give the friendly Arabs who were carrying the stores as much time as possible.

The third day I was in the bivouac, for there were no tents except for the wounded. I went to a Station Hospital to have my finger dressed, which was necessary three times a day, as the smell from it was so unpleasant. The Medical Officer in charge was doubtless as much overworked as I was, and said shortly: "I tell you what it is, sir, if you were a soldier I should say, 'Sit down, my man, and I will pull out that finger-nail.'" "I am a soldier." "Yes, but you are a General." When he had dressed the finger I went back to my tree and sent for Doctor Conolly, a friend, and telling him what had passed, asked: "Please advise me, will this nail ever reunite?" "No, it never can, as it is crushed down to the root." "How do you pull it out?" "Slit the nail down the centre, and then take hold of one half with a pair of forceps, and pull." This I did, but when the first half came out I asked for some stimulant, and then I said: "Now please, I will look away while you take out the other half."[2]

The valley in which the wells were situated was shut in. Two of the regiments, for want of ordinary precautions, let a few Arabs drive off their slaughter oxen. The work

[1] Lord Wolseley to Sir Evelyn Wood: "Remain to see the desert posts cleared out yourself, an operation requiring wise calculation and a good military head. I have every confidence in your doing this difficult job well and quickly."

[2] I was advised by one of the first surgeons in London, whom I consulted on my return, that I should never get another nail, but Mr. Bader, the oculist, who was a warm personal friend of mine, discredited this opinion, and said if I kept the finger plastered up long enough a new nail would grow, and he was right.

of supervising a retirement is always depressing, and this, with the anxiety of getting some 2000 men across a waterless desert of 100 miles, told on my health and temper.

The discipline of some regiments was not satisfactory. Wine had been taken out to Metemmeh, which was wrong, as the men had no beer or spirits, and when Colonel Gough [1] and I rode round the bivouac lines after the troops had moved off to the point of Assembly we found two corps had left some ball ammunition on the ground. Near at hand were camels, one carrying mess kit, another wine-cases. We saw the loads exchanged and the camels started, the wine remaining for the Dervishes. Perhaps I felt the more angry as I had been there three weeks without wine or stimulant of any sort, but anyhow my temper was irritable, and ten minutes later I used offensive, improper language to an officer who made a stupid mistake in forming up his men on parade. Ashamed of my bad language, I turned away and saw Father Brindle, with a pained look in his face. Next day when I was feeling much happier he came up behind me, and putting his arm on my shoulder, said: "I hope your poor brain is somewhat rested?" The hope was justified, for I had induced the camel owners to carry double loads, relieving me of anxiety about ammunition. I had also heard from Lord Wolseley, who was arranging at Korti for further operations in the autumn: "When we advance finally you may count on being one of the Generals to have a command."

We marched from 5 till 11 p.m. in a hollow square, for there were a few Arabs about, when we lay down for three hours. It was very hot in the day, and my baggage camel with blankets not being available, I found it difficult to sleep from the cold, although probably the temperature was not really low as it seemed to me, wearing serge weighing only 3 lbs. I was lying with my knees drawn up for the sake of warmth when I felt a grateful weight on my shoulders, and my first inclination with the increased warmth was to sleep, but with an effort I sat up and saw Walkinshaw fifty yards away, walking up and down in his shirt sleeves, having put his serge over me.

[1] *Vide* page 148. The same officer.

The return to Korti was painful; the men who, intent on saving Gordon, had marched with elastic step, heads up, and shoulders back, were no longer the same soldiers. Depressed by the sense of failure, they straggled, and the bonds of discipline being relaxed, some gave in while still capable of exertion.

They had, however, been severely tried; roused an hour before dawn, with the thermometer at that hour always above 60°, they had pulled or tracked whaleboats for a month 420 miles, against a rapidly flowing river, under a burning sun, and many were nearly bootless.[1]

The discipline of the Mounted Infantry sections, who acted throughout as Rear guard, remained perfect. No men fell out on the line of march, though their camels had been taken from them to carry ammunition. During a halt, I having remained behind the Column to encourage stragglers to persevere, strolled round the Rear guard position. All except the sentries were asleep, and I counted rather more than two-thirds who were marching without boots, some wearing socks, and some strips of cloth. The sound principle of Lord Wolseley's proposal, vetoed by the Commander-in-Chief in 1873 for the Ashantee Expedition, was thoroughly shown in this, and in the second Expedition to Ashantee in 1896, when sections of selected men represented different battalions. The Regimental feeling was thus strongly evoked, and the Sections vied with each other in maintaining the reputation of their Corps. Behind the Mounted Infantry sections, Major French,[2] 19th Hussars, with about 20 of his men, followed in Rear of all, and was always alert, bright, and cheerful.

I rejoined Lord Wolseley at Korti on the 14th March, and three days later was ordered to take two Squadrons of the 19th Hussars and bring back by force the Aden camel men. They had been enlisted without sufficient forethought, on a six months' engagement, which had long since expired, and the General in command of "the Nile column" had coaxed them

[1] We had boots sent out to the desert, but vanity causes the Briton to wear at home boots a size too small for him, and the men with swollen feet could not get on those they would have worn in England.

[2] Now Lieutenant-General Sir J. D. French, G.C.V.O., K.C.B., K.C.M.G.

into remaining overtime by promising they should be discharged on their return to Korti. When they found the promise was not redeemed, leaving their camels tethered, they marched off in a body down the river. I ordered the Squadrons to parade at daylight on the 18th, and, accompanied by Lieutenant Wingate, rode after the fugitives, overtaking most of them before night fell on the 17th March.

I explained the situation, and the impossibility of their reaching Aden against the will of the Government: next day they returned, and by offering them enhanced terms they agreed to remain until I could get some Sudanees to feed and care for the camels.

On New Year's day, 1885, I had received from the Sheiks of the Korosko Desert a telegraphic greeting, for which they paid, as they also did for one which they despatched to Lady Wood in England. On my return to Korti they sent me another message, and in honour of my being back safely on the Nile they killed a camel, a peculiar compliment. I heard afterwards that they were nervous for my safety while I was at Gakdul, for they had an exaggerated opinion of the power of the Mahdi.

Lord Wolseley and the Headquarters Staff went down stream from Korti on the 24th March, and having cleared up the camp, I followed next day. From a mistake in the execution of some orders I was obliged to ride 70 miles in the hot sun, and thus brought on a recurrence of diarrhœa, from which I had previously suffered from the 23rd of February to the 9th of March, and which clung to me so persistently that I was never free from pain and inconvenience until I got on board a ship in the Suez Canal on my way to England. Throughout March the doctors urged me to go down the river, but anticipating an Autumn campaign, and with the promise of a command, I evaded compliance till May, when the doctors became more insistent, and I less capable of resistance.

My health improved at Debbeh, where I commanded about 6400 men, spread out on the bank of the Nile from Old Dongola to Hamdab. The men were employed in hutting themselves, and the work was certainly beneficial in the trying climate. It was generally cool, for the Sudan, from 3 a.m. to 6 a.m., but occasionally even at that hour the thermometer

stood at 77°. From 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. daily, unless there happened to be a dust storm to add to our discomfort, there was as a rule not a breath of air, and even lizards and flies clustered under camel saddles to avoid the sun.

While two soldiers were working together one of them grumbled at the intensity of the heat, and was rebuked by his comrade, saying, "What is the use of your grousing? Don't you know there is only a bit of brown paper between us and hell?" The grumbler retorted, "And I expect that bit of paper is scorched." The Nile, always a rest for our parched eyes, at the end of March showed half a mile of mud between the banks, and little more than 100 yards of water opposite to my tent.

The soldiers had been on half rations of groceries for some weeks, and now we ran out of sugar. Officers scrambled for a 1-lb. tin of cocoa and milk at six shillings, while invalided officers sent down the river sold alcohol at thirty shillings a bottle.

The spirits of the troops had recovered from the depressing effect of the failure to save Gordon, and, in spite of all discomforts, remained good as a rule, though the difference of feeling in the camps varied according to the temperament of the general in command. Major the Honourable J. Dormer[1] wrote to me from Tani on the 16th of April, "Everyone here is cheery and contented, there is no grumbling." This, however, was primarily due to his own buoyant spirits. Two Sheiks rode into the General's camp with a message from the Mahdi, exhorting him and his followers to submit, and thus save their bodies in this world, and their souls in the next, by embracing the Mohammedan faith. The Sheik talked of the wondrous powers of the Mahdi, and when Dormer differed with him, said, "Well, can you do the marvellous things the Mahdi performs, such as praying for rain and ensure its falling?" Dormer, like all of us, knew that the Mahdi only prayed for rain when his barometer was falling, and having himself but one eye, he turned his back to the Sheiks, and taking out his glass eye he threw it up in the air and caught it, saying, "Can your Mahdi do that?" The Sheiks turned and ran without another word.

[1] Died from the effect of a bite from a panther while in command of the Madras Army.

On the 31st March I handed over the command of the Egyptian Army to Sir Francis Grenfell, who became Sirdar. I had overworked myself for two and a half years, spending £1600 of my capital, and missed all chance of joining in the fights near Suakin in 1884. His Highness the Khedive wrote me some very gracious letters, and sent me the Cordon of the Medjidie, but he could not forget how Arabi and the Egyptian soldiers had treated him in 1882, and never trusted the Fellaheen soldiery again. During my two and a half years' command he never gave them a word of praise.

I greatly admired the ability of our Consul-General, Sir Evelyn Baring,[1] a part of whose work I had shared, and was gratified by the feeling that my esteem for him was reciprocated by that singularly undemonstrative Briton.

The Commander-in-Chief, on the motion of the Secretary of State for the Colonies, was pleased to record his approbation of my efforts in endeavouring to create an Egyptian Army. The real pleasure to me was the expression of regard I received from the band of officers who came under my command in January 1883. As I wrote in my farewell order: "He believes no body of officers have ever worked with more unremitting devotion."

Lord Wolseley's opinion of our work during the campaign was favourable.[2]

[1] He wrote to me, Cairo, 18th March 1885: "You will be able to carry away the conviction that you did all that mortal man could do to make an army out of very indifferent material. I shall never forget all the support and assistance you gave me during a period of very great difficulty. . . ." And as Lord Cromer, 5th October 1892: "I do not want to go to India; if, however, I were to go I should prefer you to be Commander-in-Chief to anyone else."

[2] Extract from despatch, sent by Lord Wolseley to the Secretary of State for War:—

"CAIRO, 15*th June* 1885.

"Major-General Sir Evelyn Wood, V.C., G.C.M.G., K.C.B., was the General of Communications, and brought the utmost zeal to bear upon the arduous and difficult duties of that position. Our line of communications by rail, river, and desert, from Alexandria to Gubat, was about 1500 miles in length. The responsibility of supervising it was great, but, thanks to Sir E. Wood's ability and energy, and to the efficient support he received from the large staff of officers under his command, the army operating in the front was well fed and provided with all it required. The officers and men of the Egyptian army, under General Wood's immediate orders, worked along this line with indefatigable earnestness, and with the best possible results to the welfare of the Expedition."

SUDAN

NUBIAN DESERT
Sai I.
Absarat
Kajbar
3rd Cataract
Hannek
Abu Fatmeh
Hafir
Arko I.
DONGOLA
(ORDI)
GARARISH ARABS
Khandak
Shabatut
Bakri
Abu Kussi
Old Dongola
Kurot
Debbeh
Tani
Ambukkol
Merowi
4th Cataract
Gerendid Cataract
Hamdah
Dukeiyat
Abu Dom
Sarni
El-Howeiya
Hambok
Abu Halfa
Jakdul
Mahtul
Sotal
KABABISH ARABS
Elia
Gabra
HASSANIYEH
SHUKURIYEH ARABS
Omdurman
KHARTUM
Halfiyeh
Haggiali
Scale of Miles
50 0 50
Huella
El Kab
Hebbeh
Salamat
Kirbekan
Abu Hamed
Moggar I.
ROBATAT
Abu Ekle
5th Cataract
R. Nile
BERBER
D. Bak
R. Atbara
Ed. Damer
Abu Klea
Metemmeh
Gubat
Shendi
Nasri I.
Wad Habeshi
MEMAR I.
6th Cataract
Shablika
BISHARIN ARABS

I was disappointed when the Gazette for the Nile Expedition came out, less for myself than for those who had worked so hard while under my command, and I appealed to Lord Wolseley in their behalf, who replied on the 27th August, "I could not get my way,—the most notable omission from the list being yourself."

In spite of my being temporarily better early in May, Surgeon-General Lithgow sent me down the Nile on the 6th. As I passed Korosko the Ababdehs handed me a sword which the Sheiks then in Cairo had left for me, and a silver-mounted riding stick for Lady Wood, and they came to see me off the day I left the capital.

Lord Wolseley had expressed astonishment on my declining his offer of the Frontier command, but on seeing my thin body, and haggard face, was so startled that he tried to send me off to England the day I reached Cairo. This I earnestly represented was not necessary, as it was important that I should spend a few days in order to settle matters at the Egyptian War Office.

CHAPTER XLIII

1885–6–7–8—COLCHESTER DISTRICT

The Land League—Mr. Wrench—Life at Colchester—Useless Sentries—Reforms in Canteens—Nett profit trebled in twelve months—3rd Class shots—An unusual Inspection—My last lie—Visit to Corunna—Albuera.

I REACHED London on the 19th of June, lighter in body than I had been for many years, and I did not recover entirely from intestinal troubles till late in the year. I was no sooner home than I had some interesting correspondence with Mr. Wrench, my brother-in-law's agent at Clones in the north of Ireland. Since I assumed supervision of the estate in 1867, we had lived on amicable terms with the tenants, but in 1880 the Land League had formed branches in the north of Ireland, and most of the Clones tenantry joined the League, in 1885–6.

One farmer quarrelled with the League agents, who ordered his labourers to leave him, and the tenant appealed to Mr. Wrench for permission to hire the pig-carriers, who on the weekly market day carried pigs from the carts to the weigh-bridge, earning enough to enable them to remain idle for the rest of the week. Mr. Wrench observed, "I don't care what the men do, but you cannot have them on market day," and they worked for the former Land Leaguer. The local agent now wrote a demand to Mr. Wrench to dismiss the men from the pig-carrying job, which being referred to me was summarily refused. The League ordered that no pig buyer should go to Clones market, and as it was not only a question of principle, but also of the tolls of the market, worth £300 a year, we issued a notice that we would buy all pigs at a fair rate which were not sold on market days. As trouble was anticipated,

Colonel E. Saunderson, M.P., and some of his friends attended the next market, to support Mr. Wrench, but the Boycott was carried out without violence.

Mr. Wrench endeavoured to obtain buyers from Belfast, Drogheda, Newry, and other towns, but the League was too firmly established to enable him to succeed, and on the 23rd October I received the following telegram:—"Sending you 642 pigs next week—Wrench."

This was handed to me on my way to the War Office, and taking it to the City, I obtained the names of three respectable pig salesmen. Going to one shop in Smithfield, I asked, "What can you do for me, about 600 pigs on Tuesday next?" The man said, "Are they 'Lights' or 'Heavies'?" Now I knew something about Light and Heavy cavalry, but the term as regards pigs was unfathomable, and like Tittlebat Titmouse,[1] I said, "Little of both." The salesman looked me over, and contemptuously declined to quote a price, and so going farther down to another firm I repeated the question, only putting it, "What can you get me for 'Lights,' and what for 'Heavies'?" and having obtained an answer, I went outside, and telegraphed it to Wrench, adding, "Have you tried at Londonderry?"

Londonderry bought all our pigs, and after six months' quarrel the Land League giving in, rescinded their notice about the carriers, my brother-in-law's whole loss in the transaction being something less than a hundred pounds.

I took over the Command of the Eastern District from General White on the 31st March, and spent therein three very happy years. As soon as I had finished the inspection of the Regulars, and ten Militia, and all the Volunteer Battalions in the district, I turned my attention to "Long distance rides" for the Cavalry, and to initiating the practice of Night marches for the Infantry, beginning by training Officers and Sergeants, and the progress in the Army is shown by the fact that now brigades march many miles by compass bearings without difficulty, whereas, when I began at Colchester, the units became excited, and lost their way, in crossing diagonally the Abbey Field, the parade ground, of a few hundred yards in extent. Both officers and men took

[1] Warren's *Ten Thousand a Year.*

much interest in their work, the Artillery binding their gun-wheels with straw, to deaden the sound.

Most soldiers know the story of a sentry posted in the garden of the Kremlin at Moscow, over a plant in which the Empress Catherine was interested. The plant died in the winter, but the sentry post was maintained for over a hundred years. I believe, however, many of my comrades did not realise until the Boer War, the absurdities to be seen in our garrisons. It was so easy under most Generals to get a sentry posted; few even thought of removing a guard!

The day I assumed command at Colchester a sentry "Presented Arms" to me at the office. "What does he do here?" "Oh, sir, he is your sentry." "Send him away; I don't want him." Next day I asked, "Why is he still here?" "Oh, he's sentry over Ordnance Stores, as well as over your office." There was a wall, 10 feet high, intervening between the office and the Stores, so I ordered the post to be placed within the enclosure. When on the third morning I found the man still at the office door, I posted him myself inside the enclosure, but the Ordnance officer, thinking the place was safer if it was kept locked, begged he might be taken away.

Some days later on visiting the huts, forming the Garrison Hospital, I found a sentry over a prisoners' ward. "Open the door." "Please, sir, it's locked." "Yes, open it." "I've got no key." "Then call the Sergeant of the guard; I want to see the prisoner." "Please, sir, there is no prisoner." I said to the Medical Officer accompanying me, "What folly!" "Oh, there was a prisoner, quite recently." An indiscreet Lance-Corporal, of the Army Hospital Corps, remarked, "There has been no prisoner for three months."

A perusal of the Crime statistics induced a visit to Harwich, where one company of Garrison Artillery had more prisoners than 700 other Artillery men, in the Eastern District. Harwich and Landguard were not responsible for this unpleasant fact, but Shotley Magazine Guard, a detachment of some 25 Gunners stationed on a promontory between the Stour and Orwell rivers. The Guard duties were not heavy, but there was absolutely no means of recreation for the men,

The nearest farm was 2000 yards distant, but a public-house stood just outside the fort.

I imagine that the prestige of the Master-General of the Ordnance, typified by the Duke of Wellington, had not then died out, for I was warned by my Staff not to interfere with a Magazine. I disregarded their friendly counsels; removed all the celibate Artillery men, leaving a Master Gunner and seven married men, one of whom had to sleep dressed in the guard-room as a watchman, and to touch a tell-tale clock thrice every night, at varying hours, as ordered by the Warrant officer. This system has answered well to the present time.

In the Summer-time the officer commanding a Militia Battalion complained to me that the officer commanding a Line Battalion managing the canteen[1] would not give him sufficient for his share of the profits. Both parties agreed to accept my decision, but the line officer on my saying, "Well, give him from twenty to thirty pounds," observed, "We don't make that in a quarter." "Then you do your work badly." "If you think, sir, you could do it better, you had better try." "Yes, and I give you notice now, that I will manage it personally through one of your officers, and non-commissioned officers, from the 1st October." I made various innovations, advertising for tenders for beer, and sending for two old soldiers out of each Company, who were supplied with bread and cheese, desired them to pronounce as to the merits of samples. They all asked whose beer it was they were drinking? but the officers, who handed it out through a trap door, said, by my direction, that they were to make a choice, without receiving such information. A local Brewer obtained and kept the contract for many years.

I published a Quarterly statement of accounts, which was hung up in the canteen, and eventually paid £600 for rather more than half of a bathing-place, 100 feet × 50, the War Office granting the remainder. During the Summer-time I borrowed one of the bands twice a week to play in the evenings outside the canteen, under a large awning, and encouraged the married families to occupy the chairs I had placed for

[1] Each unit taking it in turn for three months.

them. I entirely failed, however, to induce them to take the tea and coffee, which I persevered in providing, at somewhat less than cost price, for several weeks.

The year before I took over the Command the divisible profit was under £340, whereas after twelve months I divided £1400, and the next year £1540. This money was earned to the detriment of the small public-houses in the vicinity of the barracks. I made the canteen as far as possible like a respectable music saloon, allowing free choice of music, admitting even songs which I thought vulgar, if they were not of an immoral tendency. I replaced the old beer-stained barrack tables and forms by arm-chairs and marble-topped tables. The commanding officers assured me I did not know what I was doing, and that there would be no arm on a chair in three months' time. Nevertheless I persevered, although I admit I had some misgivings when I put two large glass mirrors, 9 feet by 6, to light up the room, which being partly underground was dark, as I thought it was possible some drunken soldier might throw a pewter pot at them. Nothing untoward occurred in my time, however, nor had there been a single breakage when I visited the canteen some eight years afterwards. It is more remarkable that one of my successors, General Burnett, ten years later made a somewhat greater profit out of two Battalions, the garrison having been temporarily reduced during the building of the barracks, and mainly by raising the tone of the Entertainment.

The Adjutant-General wrote, the Eastern District was a model, and the Canteen Regulations I had then drawn up, have with some improvements since been adopted for the Army.

The Adjutant-General, Lord Wolseley, not only supported me officially in my efforts to raise the tone of the Rank and File by trusting them, but his private correspondence also was a great encouragement. I mentioned to him I meant to persevere against the views of my commanding officers, and in reply he wrote: "Your letter: every word of it is after my own heart, I have always believed in trusting the British soldier."

I had much correspondence with him throughout 1886, '87, and '88, he putting me on many War Office Committees; one of these was to decide whether the magazine of the new rifle should be Permanent or Detachable; he himself was in

favour of the latter, and was proportionately disappointed when I took him the report of the Committee, which, with one dissentient, was in favour of the permanent arrangement. He asked, "Who is the one wise man?" I said, "I am, sir." "Then why did not you say so?" "Well, I thought it would look as if I were conceited." "But you are quite right." "Yes, I think so." Two days later two of those who had voted for the permanent arrangement came round and asked to be allowed to withdraw their vote. Eventually difficulties of manufacture in the permanent system caused the better method, the detachable, to be adopted.

In 1877 the Military Secretary asked if I was willing to be considered for an appointment as Commandant-General in Australia. Although I was advised by my Aide-de-Camp, a Tasmanian born, that Federation was too far off to justify my hoping to succeed in amalgamating the forces, I answered I would go if selected, but for reasons unconnected with me, the idea at that time was not carried out.

I was working throughout 1887 and 1888 on the subject of diminishing the number of third-class shots in the Eastern District, corresponding with the School of Musketry at Hythe, and we effected some good, although the percentage of men useless with the Rifle remained high.

The new Drill book was handed over to me for report, and many of the antiquated movements formed the subject of somewhat heated discussion between those who held Lord Wolseley's views, which I was advocating, and the Old School. My opinions were summed up in a letter to his lordship, dated 8.8.87, "I hope, however, we may recognise now, all our Drill is for the more ready destruction of our enemies, with a minimum loss to ourselves, and that we prescribe formations accordingly."

I was frequently consulted on the vexed question of Chief of the Staff, or Adjutant-General, and Quartermaster-General, on which the Commander-in-Chief and Adjutant-General could not agree. The latter system was maintained in Peace for eighteen years longer, but was abandoned for warlike operations.[1]

[1] This discussion lasted from the time Sir Garnet Wolseley joined the Horse Guards Staff, after the Red River Expedition, till 1904, when a Chief of the General

Lord Wolseley employed me constantly throughout the three years I was at Colchester, with reference to his attempts to modernise the Army; and the work he gave me, coupled with a close inspection of every unit, Regulars and Auxiliary Forces, in the Eastern District, kept me fully employed.

An interesting duty which came to me in July 1888 was the selecting of positions to defend the approaches to London from the eastward. The Headquarters Staff were unable at first to accept my views, and came down three times, and on the last occasion with Lord Wolseley, and the result was that he confirmed my judgment.

My father had lived, much respected, for forty years in Essex; my elder brother, Charles Page Wood, farming his estate 10 miles distant, was often in Colchester on market days, and being very popular I had the advantage of the friendships they had made, when I wanted the use of private lands for the training of troops. The occupiers near the Barracks were very generous in allowing me to practise Outposts of all Arms, and I often had a long line, mostly on arable land, without serious complaint, though on one occasion a farmer aggrieved by officers riding over a crop, ignoring my rank, said, "If you do that again I'll tell Mr. Evelyn Wood of you."

I inspected the Infantry of the District as outposts by day and night, and on the first occasion had to find grave fault with the arrangements of a Battalion of which I had then, and have had ever since, the highest opinion. I began my inspection on the left of a line of 3 miles, the Piquet in front

staff was appointed. The Duke of Cambridge's opposition to any change was shared by many of his contemporaries. General Sir John Michel, who was singularly broad-minded, opposed it. In the 1872 Manœuvres, from my accident I was unable to ride until the last few days, so undertook the office work of both branches. One evening Sir John Michel was arguing the point against his two Senior Officers, Colonel A. Herbert[1] and Sir Garnet Wolseley, and as neither disputant would give way, Sir John, to terminate the discussion, said, "There is no overlapping of work where Staff officers are properly trained, as I'll show you.—Here's Wood who has done all our writing, we'll leave it to him. Tell me, Wood, have I ever in the last three weeks made a single mistake in addressing the Adjutant-General, when I should have written Quartermaster-General, or the reverse?" I owed much to Sir John, but had to speak the truth: "Sir, I cannot recall a single day when you have not made mistakes."

[1] Later, Sir Arthur Herbert, Quartermaster-General.

of which was badly placed. No. 7 Company was worse. On passing behind No. 6, a sentry who should have been standing motionless looking to his front, faced about and "Presented Arms" to me. Losing patience, I ordered the Battalion home, saw the officers in the orderly room, and expressed very decided opinions as to the want of instruction, indicated that morning. As I finished, saying, "Gentlemen, I will see you again when your Commanding officer says you are ready for inspection;" he observed, "It is just lunch time, sir, will you come in?" I did so, and my friendship with that Battalion has been uninterrupted ever since.

A few evenings later, a Subaltern of the Battalion dining with me alone, said, "We had such bad luck with you, General, last week, the Regiment has now been inspected for 150 years, and you are the first general who ever began on the left of the line, and we knew when the word was passed up that you had started there, that we should have an unhappy morning, for Bobby ——, our show captain,[1] was on the right with the most capable officers, and on the extreme left were the most inefficient. Now it generally happens that a general when he has seen half a long outpost line well posted, being satisfied, goes home, and we were calculating on a stereotyped inspection."

In the middle of July, after seeing some interesting Artillery practice on Dartmoor, I took my horses on to Exmoor, where Mr. Basset, the Master of the Devon and Somerset Staghounds, had a meet for my pleasure, and gave me a most enjoyable run.

Yielding to a warm invitation from Canon Bell, I went to Marlborough at the end of the month, for the double purpose of attending the breaking-up day and inspecting the Cadet companies. While the Head was giving out prizes, he asked, "Sir Evelyn, did you learn much Latin here?" "Not much, I'm afraid." "Perhaps Greek?" "I think less." "Then may I ask what you did learn?" "Oh, I'll tell you presently, as you say I have got to speak to the School."

When I got up, in the course of my speech I mentioned this fact, and said, "I promised to tell the Head, and you

[1] Now a General officer on the Staff.

at the same time. You are probably envious of those boys who have taken prizes. In your place I should have been, for I never took a prize during the five years I was at school, but I learned something, and within 20 feet of where I am now standing, in May 1851. The Reverend J. Biden was an ardent fisherman, and one afternoon when our task was Arithmetic, somewhat scamped in work in those days, we knew that 'Jacky' was anxious to get out to the banks of the Kennet. He gave me four Addition sums out of Colenso's Arithmetic, which he apparently copied out of the book. After allowing an interval of a quarter of an hour to elapse, I, taking the answers from the book, wrote them down, and went up, expecting to see a big 'R' across the slate, and an intimation that I might go. To my horror he looked over the sums saying, 'But you have fudged this?' 'No, sir.' 'But you have.' 'No, sir.' Now, if 'Jacky' had ordered me to 'Stand round,' I might have continued to tell lies till to-day; he said, however, 'I thought you were a brave little boy, and only cowards tell lies.' I say to you, Boys, whether you believe me or not, I have never told a lie since, and that lesson was worth more than all the learning acquired by all the prize-takers who have just now been up to this table."

I travelled Westward that evening, joining Sir John Pender, who took a party in the S.S. *Electra* to the Mediterranean for a trip, inducing Sir John to invite my friend, Colonel Ardagh,[1] for whom indeed he waited till 1 a.m. on the 2nd September, when we sailed for Corunna. I saw a great deal of Dean Bradley, who was a sympathetic companion, and Sir Robert Herbert, whose charming personality was well known. When we got into the Bay on the 3rd, I gave a lecture on Sir John Moore's battle, the scene of which we successfully visited next day, except that Dean Bradley had a bad fall from a donkey, which rolled over him. Our impression, which I imagine is that of everyone who has visited the Field, was that Moore did very well under unusually difficult circumstances.

We steamed round the coast of Portugal, waiting on the King at Lisbon, and my kind host being greatly distressed to find I had no medals, insisted on my wearing on my evening coat, which we put on at midday, for our Royal audience, a

[1] General Sir John Ardagh, K.C.B.

C.M.G. Next day Ardagh and I visited Torres Vedras, on which immensely strong position the works erected by Wellington are apparently much as they were at the time of their occupation, A.D. 1810.

The party now separated, Ardagh and I going by train to Badajos, whence we visited the field of Albuera.

The young Spanish officer sent to us as a guide at Badajos because he spoke a little French, was not aware that the British had successfully assaulted the place, his knowledge of the operations of the Sieges being confined to the attacks, and defence of the French and Spaniards. It will repay any soldier even now to visit Badajos, for it is easy to follow Napier's wonderful description of the Assault.

Probably all soldiers have heard the story, that Lord Beresford had ordered a retreat from Albuera when it was countermanded, and how the gallant charge of the Fusilier Brigade snatched victory from the French at the last moment. At Gibraltar, coming fresh from the battlefield, I asked General Sir Arthur Hardinge, the Governor, "Did your father ever talk to you of Albuera?" "Yes, very often." "Is it true that he was the Staff officer who countermanded Beresford's order to retreat?" "No, no one did so; but my father went to Beresford, and said, 'You have got, sir, a Court-martial on one hand, and a Peerage on the other,' and he replied slowly, 'I will try for the Peerage,' and himself gave the order to stop the retreat, and my father then ordered the Fusilier Brigade to advance."

When the ship reached Cadiz, on the 13th August, I received a telegram from my wife, to whom a friend had confided the information that Sir Archibald Alison was about to vacate the Aldershot command, to join the India Council. Lord Wolseley had told me on many occasions he intended to press for my appointment to that command, and at one time he imagined the chances of my getting it were at ten to one; later, my chances sank to even betting. I thought, in any case, it would be wise for me to return home, and obtained the assent of our kind host to my leaving the ship at Barcelona.

Nothing could exceed his generosity; he not only entertained us perfectly on board, but insisted on paying our

expenses on shore, even to our washing bills, when we were at Granada, where I lingered for forty-eight hours to enjoy more fully the Alhambra. Ardagh and I returned from Barcelona, after a delightful trip, and I reached Colchester after an absence of three weeks.

When the Headquarters Staff returned to London after the holidays, there was a protracted discussion over the question of my succeeding Sir Archibald Alison at Aldershot. Lord Wolseley advocated it strenuously, as he expressly said, not for any regard for me, but because he thought I was more successful in instructing [1] Regiments than anyone else he knew. I was also, he thought, fit to take the Division abroad should it be necessary.

The Commander-in-Chief wished to appoint an office for much longer service, and after weeks of argument the matter was left to the decision of Mr. Stanhope, the Secretary of State. He sent for Sir Redvers Buller, who was Quartermaster-General, and asked for his views. Buller replied, "I have seen three disasters in my service, and they all came from want of instruction. Do you believe that Evelyn Wood is a good teacher?" "Yes," said Mr. Stanhope, "I am told he is quite satisfactory in that respect." "Then I advise you to appoint him." Mr. Stanhope was kind enough to say to me, when telling me the story, "I am glad I did so."

[1] Lord Wolseley, when informing me privately the matter was settled, wrote: "And I hope you may be as successful in teaching soldiers at Aldershot as you have been at Colchester."

CHAPTER XLIV

1889—ALDERSHOT

£3000 borrowed for Installation—Rebuilding of Barracks in Company blocks—Names of Barracks—A troublesome inheritance of debt—Personal Staff—Lonsdale Hale—Henderson—Commander-in-Chief disapproves of Night Marches—The German Emperor—Mr. Stanhope.

ALTHOUGH I had some horses and sufficient furniture for the house hired by Government for the General of the Eastern District at Colchester, yet I had to borrow £3000 to instal myself at Aldershot, where I took over Command on the 1st January. I returned to Colchester twice for farewell festivities, which the Residents kindly insisted on offering me. I received not only in Essex but in East Anglia much hospitality during my Command.

On getting to my new station I had a conference on musketry, but there being a Divisional Inspector for Aldershot I had merely to indicate my wishes, and support him in trying to improve the shooting of the troops.

I knew the wretched accommodation provided for the troops, neither wind nor rain proof, having been quartered in the North and South Camps twenty years earlier. The contractor in 1855 had guaranteed the huts for thirteen years, so his work was good; but the annual upkeep amounted in the eighties to £7000, with a constantly increasing outlay, in spite of the fact that the barracks of three battalions in the North Camp had been rebuilt in brick, on the bungalow principle.

I strongly advocated the immediate reconstruction of the South Camp, and the rebuilding in brick for the units still hutted in the North Camp, but on a different system. I had been striving for years to get a fuller recognition of the Company system, the value of which had been impressed on

me in 1867–8, when I lived as Brigade Major in the Lines of the 68th battalion (1st Durham Light Infantry). One morning about 4 a.m., the Assistant Adjutant-General and I having spent the night at Sandhurst College helping to extinguish a fire, were parting close to his hut, when he said, "Send three more companies over at once." "Yes, sir." "Which shall you send?" "68th." "Why, are they first for duty?" "Oh, I don't know, nor care, for I am tired; and if they go, I need not get up at 6.30. to ensure their breakfasts are sent over." When the battalion was leaving Aldershot, General Sir Alfred Horsford said: "Wood, the 68th is the best organised battalion I have ever known. Find out the reason." Instead of riding down to the station, I walked on in advance with the Quarter-Master, Mr. Sladen, and from him elicited the fact that the Company system had been started in the forties, and maintained ever since, which accounted for the smoothness of running in the battalion.

The Commanding officer's or Adjutant's battalion is good enough for Peace and Show, but is ill-adapted for emergencies, and breaks-down on service. The disadvantage of breaking up units, now generally admitted in the army, was so little understood even thirty years ago, that a common order was: "Send a strong squadron, or a strong company;" and in 1881 when I demurred to sending from Natal "a strong Company," at least 120, to the mouth of the St. John river, my brother General at Cape Town declined my alternative proposal to send one Company, about 90, or two Companies, about 180 strong; and as I would not give way, the dispute was telegraphed to the War Office, and the Adjutant-General, Lord Wolseley, approved of my action. I advocated, therefore, from experience that the new barracks to be built should be in Company blocks, and after some discussion this was approved. My recommendation that each barrack should in name commemorate a British victory, was approved only after repeated applications. I personally "sited" all barracks built in my time, at a cost of about £1,500,000. The Adjutant-General and Inspector-General of Fortifications, who came to criticise before approving, on their departure said frankly, "In London we did not like your scheme at all, but are now in complete agreement with your views." Later, when the Plans, Prices, and

Execution were questioned in the House of Commons, the Secretary of State appointed a committee of Civilian Architects and builders, who reported that the Royal Engineers had made good plans, the Contractors had done their part satisfactorily, and the country had obtained full value for its expenditure.

I inherited a troublesome task in the Officers' Club-house, which I found with an increasing debt, the liabilities standing at £1100, and my brother officers disagreed with my economically drastic proposals for meeting our liabilities, offering several impracticable suggestions; one, that we should borrow the money in the name of the Division. I asked the General officer who made this proposal if he would sign a paper as one of the guarantors of the debt, but this he absolutely declined! I then offered to put down £100 on the table as my share, if every officer in the Division would subscribe in proportion to his pay, based on my pay and contribution. The Seniors at once vetoed this suggestion, and my plans were eventually accepted, with the result that four years later all the liabilities had been met, and I handed a cash balance of over £1600 to my successor. This satisfactory result was mainly owing to the business-like aptitudes of my senior Aide-de-camp, Major C. Parsons,[1] Royal Artillery, who made a profit of £550 out of Subscription dances.

Like Major Parsons, my Cavalry Aides-de-camp were selected on military grounds; indeed I did not know personally either Captain Babington, 16th Lancers, or his successor, Captain H. D. Fanshawe, 19th Hussars, before they came to Aldershot.

Babington had been described to me as a keen soldier, and one of the best "across country" men in the Cavalry, and he fully merited the description. When he was obliged to rejoin his Regiment, on its departure for India, I invited Hew Fanshawe to succeed him on my personal Staff; I had noticed his singularly quiet but determined manner, and thorough knowledge of all Regimental details two years previously, when inspecting the Regiment of which he was Adjutant. He was, moreover, a thorough sportsman, and in spite of being badly off, hunted the Regimental pack of Staghounds while quartered

[1] Now Major-General Sir Charles Parsons, commanding at Halifax, Nova Scotia.

at Norwich, and was known to have got single-handed, in Arran, on 12th August 1888, 161 grouse with 200 cartridges. I never met a harder working officer, or one who understood better, stable management. His horses never refused their food, though I have known him rail them to Reading, ride 17 miles to meet the South Oxfordshire hounds, and return at night to Aldershot. Such practical sportsmen were of great assistance to me in the outdoor work which now engaged most of my time.

The system of umpiring at tactical exercises with Opposing forces was unsatisfactory, and it had the effect of stopping all initiative on the part of the cavalry. In one of our first exercises I came on a brigade halted near a small wood. I asked, "What is it; why are you stopping?" "There are Infantry in the wood." "How many?" "We don't know." "Then why don't you ascertain?" "If we go forward and ascertain, the Umpire will send us home." "Well, I shall do that now, if you stop here doing nothing." Then Sir Drury Lowe, who commanded the Cavalry brigade, and with whom I had had the pleasure of serving in India, and I set to work to improve matters. We took command of opposing forces, Cavalry against Infantry, and acted also as Umpires on terms of equality, and soon had the satisfaction of seeing an improvement.

The Gunners had been dominated by the result of imaginary Infantry fire, the effect of which was estimated by the results of target practice on known ranges, and insufficient consideration had been credited to the Artillery for the effect of their fire on the opposing Infantry. The Artillery were still practising drill in use during the Peninsula War; one of the favourite movements, and perhaps the most useless, being "Changing front, right, and left, on the centre sub-division." I found there were two standards of Efficiency, the Aldershot ideal, which may be described as smartness in turn-out, and mobility, Regimentally known as "First gun off"; and the Okehampton ideal, the motto for which was "Hit, Hit, Hit." I tried to combine the better points of the two systems. The General in command of the Artillery, who possessed a high sense of duty, was, however, best known in the Army from his desire to advance to decisive Ranges. He talked openly, as

indeed he wrote, against the work at Okehampton, where, however, he had never seen his men practise.

On the other hand, a very clever officer, who had the ear of the Artillery authorities in Pall Mall, was engaged in editing a new drill book, already in type, the key-note of which was "Service conditions." It inculculated, however, too strongly, in my opinion, caution in order to avoid losses. I endeavoured to find a middle way between these opposing views, and to some extent succeeded, laying down the principle that our ideal should be the destruction of the enemy as cheaply as possible, but when necessary at all costs.

After my first Artillery tactical exercise I remarked to the officers assembled at the conference, that I had looked through the sights of ten guns in one position, and found seven of them laid in the air. The Artillery tactical days I initiated in 1890 induced greater attention being paid to the handling of brigades when coming into action, and enabled me to classify the individual skill of the Lieutenant-Colonels in command. No part of my instructional duties has given me so much pleasure as I got from working with the Artillery, from the zest and broad-minded spirit with which Gunners of all Ranks took up the new system. I do not know any compliment which has pleased me so much as that paid to me by the Council in 1892, in enrolling me an honorary member of the Institution of the Royal Artillery, in recognition of my efforts to improve the war training of the Arm. The letter offering me the distinction was couched in such appreciatory words as to enhance the value of the honour.

I saw each Infantry Brigade separately, and created some astonishment by the attention I demanded to exactitude in the Manual exercises and in parade movements. One General said to me, "We thought you did not care for such details." I replied, "I do not think battles are won by them, and want to do as little as possible of them; but what we do should be done as well, and with as much exactitude, as possible."

While I was at Colchester I got three selected captains in different Battalions to draw up a form of report of Company training, which I introduced at Aldershot, and on which 82 Captains reported at the end of the first and second years' training. They were practically unanimous in favour of it,

suggesting only minor alterations; and eighteen months later the Adjutant-General wrote: "As the system of Company training introduced at Colchester and at Aldershot by you has proved so successful, I am directed to ask you to consider the larger question of training Battalions throughout the year at all other Stations."

I began in 1889 with Companies of Infantry, then in succession giving my attention to the instruction of Battalions and Brigades, and later, the handling of Forces of all Arms; and endeavoured to work out the most useful method of applying Cavalry combined with Mounted Infantry, both in Strategical and Tactical operations. In the latter I made a point of never criticising adversely anyone, of whatever rank, for having failed to carry out orders, if he had a sound reason for not doing so.

In my criticisms on Tactical operations I was greatly assisted by the friendly advice of an old comrade, Colonel Lonsdale Hale, a man of calm judgment and of great military knowledge. He had at his fingers' ends every incident of the Franco-Prussian War, both as regards the operations on the eastern frontier and those on the Loire. While he took an interest in all Arms, he paid particular attention to Artillery and Infantry, and attended nearly every Tactical operation I carried out, often accompanied by Colonel Henderson, whose early death has been eloquently lamented by Lord Roberts as a great loss to the Army. Hale discussed with me, verbally or on paper, every decision after it was given, unless it met his views; and this had the effect of improving materially the value of my judgment.

I had the satisfaction of introducing a more even scale of justice, for on joining the Division I found that in two brigades, only half a mile apart, soldiers tried by Court-Martial on the same day for identical offences received, the better character a year, and the worse character—a man with two previous convictions—eighty-four days' imprisonment with hard labour.

The Draft Season 1889–90 impressed all with the value of Lord Wolseley's scheme of Territorial Regiments. On one occasion, when a large draft of the Suffolk Regiment was on furlough pending embarkation for India, we received a telegram that the ship would be delayed for another fortnight, and letters

were sent to every man postponing his return. I asked the Commanding officer, "Will they all come back?" "We are absolutely certain of all except two, who are doubtful." In effect all, including those two, returned punctually; and later, when the 1st Somerset Light Infantry embarked for Gibraltar, every man was present.

This battalion had fought under my command at Kambula, Zululand, and happened to be quartered within 400 yards of Government House, in the grounds of which could be seen any afternoon from ten to a dozen hares, for which the enclosure became a preserve, thus affording officers and men much amusement with the Foot beagles. Some of the hares were coursed with greyhounds in the early mornings, and I had reason to believe that men in the Somerset owned the dogs. Two privates, indeed, were seen in the grounds; but I had been on especially friendly terms with the battalion since 1879, and instead of having the men punished I sent a message through the Adjutant, to be passed on by the Sergeant-Major, that the General particularly wanted poachers kept out of the Government House grounds, and from that day no soldier trespassers gave any trouble.

I found, on taking over the command, a system in force of issuing "General" and "Special" ideas the previous day, so that the officers in command might have ample time to make up their minds, and to ask advice as to what should be done. This system I changed, warning combatants to be ready to march at a certain hour, and sending the Special Ideas to Squadrons, Batteries, and Companies in reasonable time for them to be explained to all concerned, so that they were ready before the operations began, which was generally two hours later.

I did not always succeed in my efforts to impart instruction; indeed I learnt accidentally from a young officer, in the third year of my command at Aldershot, that he had not seen any of the criticisms on which, after long days in the saddle, Colonel Hildyard[1] and I had spent several hours every night, often not going to bed till 2 a.m. On inquiry I ascertained that the Adjutant (for the commanding officer did not appear much in the transaction) had kept them carefully in his camp-bag, that

[1] Now Lieutenant-General Sir Henry Hildyard, Commanding Troops in South Africa.

they might be read to the troops on their return, when any interest evoked must have evaporated. Still we imparted some instruction.

I was fortunate in having to deal with polished gentlemen as my subordinates; but in addition, Brigadier-General Mansfield Clarke [1] was a man of experience, tact, and decision. I cannot recall having made any adverse remarks on the training of those under his command.

I corresponded with some of my contemporary, and earlier Staff College graduates, then commanding troops in India, and endeavoured to assimilate the best of the methods practised in India. I was Staff officer in 1867 to, I believe, the first Flying Column which left Aldershot, and when I sent out those in 1889, I tried to bring the instruction up to date.

For this purpose, during the ten days or fortnight that each of the three columns was in the field, I not only kept it mobilised from Monday morning to Saturday night, but also the troops remaining in Aldershot, as this gave me the power of attacking the columns, which moved around Aldershot in a circle on a radius of from one to two marches.

The constant state of readiness from Monday to Saturday interfered with Society engagements; but my comrades accepted the innovations in a soldier-like manner, and I was enabled to test the precautions taken by the columns to ensure security by day and night, by sending parties out to endeavour to effect surprises. I always accompanied the attackers as Umpire in chief. Mansfield Clarke was the only General who escaped being surprised in our first year's operations.

On the 22nd of July, after the conclusion of a parade of the Cavalry brigade, the Commander-in-Chief, in the presence of Commanding officers and Squadron leaders, animadverted strongly on my practising Night operations, of which he expressed strong disapproval; adding that he had never carried them out, and he especially disapproved of horses being employed, as it interfered with their rest.

The Chief on this occasion declined to come to lunch, and rode straight back to Farnborough Station. I sent my Aide-de-camp, Captain Babington, who was the finest horseman in

[1] Now General Sir C. Mansfield Clarke, Bart., Governor and Commander-in-Chief, Malta.

the Division, to Government House at speed, whence, carrying a basket on his arm, he produced at the station something in the shape of light refreshments for the Head Quarters Staff.

When we were alone, Major Parsons,[1] the senior Aide-de-camp, observed, "It is scarcely possible, sir, you heard everything the Commander-in-Chief said?" "Why?" and I repeated the Chief's words almost verbatim. "But when you saluted I could not see a muscle of your face move." I then described the scene I had witnessed some twenty years earlier on the same spot, when the Colonel of the "Wait-a-bits" gave us an object lesson in discipline (*vide* vol. i. pp. 235–236).

The Chief had been misled, as only one Squadron had been employed once, at night, for a raid; but Cavalry often moved before dawn in order to operate at daylight.

The unpleasant affair reacted locally in my favour, for even those who disliked the increased work I was imposing, resented a General being rebuked in the presence of his subordinates. Nevertheless, I felt that my position was difficult, and wrote that evening to the Adjutant-General offering to resign the command. This he strongly discouraged, writing, "Pray go on as you are doing;" and I did so. At a Ceremonial parade which followed soon afterwards, the Commander-in-Chief announced "He had never seen anything better," which praise was repeated practically at every succeeding inspection during my command. The Chief had previously apprehended novel tactics implied relaxation of discipline.

Without the practice of night marches, the Boer War would have lasted much longer than it did.[2]

Towards the end of July we started some night firing, practising the repelling of an assault on trenches, the men being instructed to fire at a tinkling bell, with an occasional electric flash on a target.

On the 7th August His Imperial Majesty the German Emperor reviewed the Division. He is bright, with a decided direct manner; a good horseman. His quick and very intelligent

[1] Now Major-General Sir Charles Parsons, K.C.B.

[2] Extract from a private letter to Sir Evelyn Wood from Brigadier-General Rimington, one of the most successful Light Cavalry Leaders, who commanded a mounted column in the Boer War, dated Heilbron, O.R.C., 5.8.01: "Nearly all our work is done at night, and we have not yet made a night march without a fairly good result."

mind takes in every detail at a glance, and he possesses a marvellous memory. In speaking of our soldiers boxing, the Emperor asked, "How do you manage to prevent the men of a defeated boxer's regiment quarrelling in the canteens?" I said, "Your Majesty, nearly all Britons are true sportsmen by instinct, and accept the umpire's decision; moreover, the championship is an honour which never induces bad feeling."

He was galloping on the Fox Hills, overlooking Aldershot from the eastward, when he passed an Infantry soldier with pouches for carrying the ammunition up into the firing line, and stopped to examine the sack. As he restarted, he remarked on it in German, and on my replying, asked, "When and where did you learn your German?" "Oh, many years ago, sir." "Well, how have you kept it up?" "I go occasionally to shoot with a friend in the Rhein Pfalz. He has a large tract of forest."

Two years later I wished to go to the German manœuvres, and wrote to our Military Attache stating that His Majesty the Emperor had been kind enough to ask me in 1889 and 1890, when I was unable to avail myself of the honour, but I should like to go in 1891, as for personal reasons I wanted a change of scene. The Emperor replied, "Tell him I am not asking any officers this year; but I remember he has a shooting, or one of his friends has a shooting, in the Rhein Pfalz, and if he should be there in my country before the Manœuvres, I shall be delighted to send him an invitation."

The Emperor spoke very well in English at the lunch given by Command of Her Majesty the Queen, and after it was over the Princess of Wales preceded the Imperial cortege to the Saluting Base, on which the troops assembled while the Imperial party lunched. His Majesty the Emperor galloped at speed for half a mile, and reining in his horse gracefully immediately in front of the carriage of the Princess of Wales, saluted. All the attending Staff reined up in their places except one German Naval officer, whose horse careered on wildly, until hearing all those following stop, pulled up very suddenly, with the result that the officer described a circle in the air, and sat on the ground immediately in front of the Royal carriage.

When at the conclusion of the Review the Emperor was cantering back to the station, the same officer passed him at a gallop, and coming on some gorse bushes, the horse jumped them, with the result that the officer again fell. As the Emperor passed he observed to me, "By Jove, there's the Admiral overboard again."

His Majesty, in thanking me, proposed to give me a decoration, but I explained that we were not allowed to wear them,[1] and he sent me, as he did to Admiral Sir E. Commerell, a magnificent uniform sword, the hilt studded with diamonds. As I learnt later, the Emperor was really pleased, and one of his generals spoke frankly about the day's operations to a friend of mine, who wrote down briefly all he said. "Everything was much better than we expected. The Cavalry, though individually man and horse is excellent, do not ride in sufficiently close formation in the charge. The Artillery horses and equipment is the finest ever seen. The Infantry are well drilled, but their pace is too short."

There had been much perturbation in Pall Mall as to this visit, for on previous occasions the Aldershot Division had rehearsed all parades for Royalties, thus losing time which should have been spent in training for Field Service, which I invariably, during my command, declined to interrupt for any Spectacular parades. Lord Wolseley declining to interfere, contented himself by saying, "Trust the man on the spot," and carried his point, though with some difficulty.

I received a very kind letter from the Secretary of State, congratulating me on the "brilliant success." He added, "Personally I was also exceedingly gratified by the March past, because some had been croaking to me that it would be spoiled by the previous manœuvres."

In thanking Mr. Stanhope, I explained that "the operations were as realistic as they could be under the given conditions, —a fixed hour, the area to be confined to the vicinity of the lunch tent, and the March past to be fitted in before the Emperor's return, which necessitated the attacks being prearranged, and timed like 'turns' in a large music hall. It is true I designed the movements, but there my personal share ended; the five general officers carried out my ideas with

[1] This has since been changed.

perfect loyalty, accepting victory or defeat *cum æquo animo*, and it is to them and the Divisional Staff, the general success of the day is due."

I went on to praise the arrangements made by Colonel North Crealock,[1] the Assistant Quarter-Master-General, who received and despatched troops attending the Review from outside Aldershot, every unit of which was met by an Army Service Corps officer, de-trained, conducted to a Rest camp with all sanitary arrangements, supplied with food, re-entrained, and enabled to reach its permanent station within its scheduled time.

At the end of August, Lords Wolseley, Wantage, and Harris came down to see "Field firing" on Bisley Common, and with Sir Henry Brakenbury and myself were riding behind a Maxim gun, which was drawn by a mule, when, the stopper not being on, a bullet was accidentally fired, passing between our horses' legs. After I had rebuked the man in charge for his carelessness, his comrade made the quaint observation, "My, wasn't that dangerous; it might have shot the poor moke."

[1] He died when commanding a Division in India.

CHAPTER XLV

1889–90—REFORMS AT ALDERSHOT

Colonel Grattan's Reforms in purchase of Supplies—Divisional Staff Brigadiers—Decentralisation—Useless Sentries—Cooking Reforms—Colonel Burnett's system—Lord Wantage's help in Field Training—Stanley, the Explorer—Sir John Pender—Ober-Ammergau—Cavalry Manœuvres—Concession in soldiers' fares—Changes for Christmas-Day.

THE day I joined at Aldershot I saw the Generals, Commanding officers, and all the Staff officers in succession. I was struck by one face and voice, Colonel Grattan of the Army Service Corps, and desired him to wait until the Reception was over. I then said: "Colonel, I am puzzled, because listening to your voice, and watching your eyes, I seem to dream I knew you years ago, but have the impression that the man whom I befriended materially in his career had a one-syllable name; moreover, I have only known one Grattan in the Service, and you are not the man." He replied: "Your memory is quite accurate, Sir. I was once your clerk; you got me made in succession, Camp Quarter-Master Sergeant, Garrison Sergeant-Major, and eventually got me a commission as a Conductor in the Army Service Corps, which I am now commanding at this Station. I enlisted under the name of Smith, and reverted to my own name on being commissioned." Grattan enabled me to introduce many reforms, which without his aid would have been impossible.

During my period of Command the Army Service Corps establishment was greatly increased, the officers by volunteers from the Line. The Commanding officers not knowing that 10,000, or one-third of our Crimea army, died from want of adequate Departmental arrangements, did not appreciate the necessity of recommending only thoroughly good officers.

Colonel Grattan and I rejected in one year one-third of those sent as Probationers.

Soon after I assumed command the Forage contractors raised their prices. The contractor for hay demanded a large advance; and being financially assisted by others, bought all the available crop in the four counties adjoining Aldershot. I declined the terms, and going further afield, bought largely in the Eastern counties—over 3000 tons in Essex alone; and even with the heavy railway rates, reduced the original contract price by three shillings a ton.[1] We purchased in most cases the hay in stacks in 1889, which was difficult, as it required officers with much experience in judging quantity and quality, with the further disadvantage that we had no market for "outsides," which are generally worth about 15s. a ton to farmers, for stock. We did not buy in stacks in 1890, as the hay harvest was gathered in very wet weather; but I maintained the practice of the Army Service Corps buying the hay, as —affording practice for their duties in war; secondly, to abolish the demoralisation of subordinates generally attendant on the contract system[1]; and thirdly, on the ground of economy, by eliminating the middleman.

In order to teach Cavalry officers to judge oats, I bought everything on the London Corn Exchange, the Cavalry brigadier selecting his Representative, while Colonel Grattan nominated an officer of the Army Service Corps with a view to due economy being exercised. These officers, supplied with the latest *Corn Circular*, were instructed to note the quantities in the port of London; the anticipated arrivals, and the customs of the market. In the result we bought oats weighing nearly 40lbs. a bushel, all expenses being included, with a considerable saving on the contractor's charge for oats weighing 38lbs.

Colonel Grattan's next marked assistance to me was in helping Colonel Burnett,[2] Assistant Quarter-Master General, to defeat the tactics of the Meat contractors. At the end of

[1] The contractor became a Bankrupt.

[2] Lieutenant-General Sir James Yorke Scarlett told me in 1868, that to a committee in the early 60's on which he served, it was clearly shown that on one Station all non-commissioned officers and men on duty received various sums from the forage contractors, down to the orderly officer's batman, who received 1s. 6d. per diem.

[3] Now Lieutenant-General C. J. Burnett, C.B.

May 1901, the Firm which had undertaken to supply us with live meat till the 1st November, refused to fulfil the engagement, forfeiting the £100 deposit. The contract was then offered to all other tenderers at their own prices, but they refused to undertake it, and believing that there was a combination to force up the price, on Sunday afternoon the 30th May I sent Colonel Burnett, Colonel Grattan, and the Master butcher to Smithfield with £1700,[1] which they spent soon after daylight before our former contractors came on to the Market. The Government, all expenses included, and even with the difficulty of disposing of the offal, made a profit on the transaction, and we found another contractor at our previous rates.

I was very fortunate in the officers on the Divisional Staff. Colonel C. W. Robinson, Assistant Adjutant-General, who had a particular polished manner, which ordinarily concealed considerable force of character, was followed by Colonel Henry Hildyard,[2] who on going to be Commandant of the Staff College was succeeded by Colonel James Alleyne, considered, and with reason, to be the best Gunner in the Army. Soon after he joined I observed to some senior Artillery officers with whom I was on friendly terms, "Hitherto I have spoken to you with an uncertain voice, but now I have got James Alleyne behind me, you may expect much more decided criticism."

Lieutenant-Colonel Edward Hutton[3] had been training Mounted Infantry successfully before I took over command, and continued to do that work, and much other, throughout my time at Aldershot. I have often been congratulated on the efforts I made in training Mounted Infantry, but I had little to do with it except to give Hutton a free hand, and to support

[1] The War Office system of centralisation was shown markedly by a Paymaster's conduct in this case. I received several telegrams suggesting I should give way to the contractors' demands, rather than risk a failure of supply; and when I declined, I was asked if I was prepared to accept the full responsibility of feeding the Troops. I answered in the affirmative. On the 30th May, sending for a Paymaster, I ordered him to give me a cheque for £1700. He absolutely refused to do so, without War Office authority. However, when I told him to go away under arrest for disobedience, and to send me the next senior Paymaster, he wrote the cheque.

[2] Lieutenant-General Sir Henry Hildyard, K.C.B., Commander-in-Chief in South Africa.

[3] Now Major-General Sir Edward Hutton, K.C.B.

him with those who were senior to him. No work was too much for him, and it was he who reorganised the Aldershot Tactical Society, and Officers' Library, besides undertaking other useful work.

Mansfield Clarke[1] and Hildyard advised me on all Infantry matters, while Lieutenant-Colonel French[2] of the 19th Hussars, after he came to Aldershot, was a warm supporter of my efforts to improve the Cavalry. I was unable to obtain for him written authority to carry out the Squadron system in its entirety, but he did it, and with such decision as to disregard the claims of seniority for the command of Squadrons.

I endeavoured to follow Lord Bacon's recommendation, "Preserve the rights of inferior places, and think it more honour to direct in chief than to be busy in all," which might be expressed in the language of the twentieth century, "Do nothing yourself that you can make another man do."

My first principle in teaching was de-centralisation. I tried to pass the training from the Commanding officers, that is, the Adjutants and Sergeant-Majors, to Squadron and Company officers. The Battery Commanders did their own work in striving for mobility and smartness. I to some extent satisfied the Commanding officers by giving them twice a week, for two months, every man on their strength for parade, the Generals and Staff having to give up their grooms and servants, which sacrifice, good as it was for efficiency, did not add to my popularity. I caused Coal and all other Fatigues to be done in the afternoon, employing condemned waggons to carry the coal and firewood. After abolishing Divisional fatigues, I assembled later a committee of the five generals, who laid down the exact number of non-commissioned officers and men who should be excused parades ordered to be "as strong as possible."

At the end of 1889 we had made some progress in reducing the percentage of third-class shots, which fell during the year from 40–54 per centum to 13–28 per centum in Cavalry units; and in Infantry units from 25–32 per centum to 13–28 per centum. I was not, however, satisfied, and realising that we

[1] Sir C. Mansfield Clarke, Bart, G.C.B., now Governor and Commander-in-Chief at Malta.

[2] Now General Sir John French, K.C.B., commanding at Aldershot.

should never get the men to shoot fairly until we had more officers as experts, I asked the commandant at Hythe if he could not take some more classes. As this was impossible for want of accommodation, I, with the sanction of the Adjutant-General, started classes at Aldershot under Major Salmond, who had been an Instructor at Hythe. The Hythe Staff objected, alleging that the instruction could not be so thorough, and would not justify a Hythe certificate. This I met by arranging that their Staff should examine the candidates, and before the Aldershot classes were stopped we trained 118 gentlemen in the first duty of an Infantry officer.

When inspecting what was then the First Division, Telegraph Battalion, at Chobham in the summer, I saw the men lay an overhead wire of 2 miles 7 furlongs, and pass a message through it in forty-two minutes. When the same Battalion were employed with troops the result was not satisfactory, as the men being unaccustomed to work with men of other units, made bad mistakes, and communication even for a short distance was not maintained. This reflected no discredit on the Corps, as I learned incidentally that this was the first time they had ever been either inspected by a general in command, or had worked with troops, having previously done their annual course as a separate and detached Unit.

Up to July 1889, when a soldier was sent to hospital his dinner was cooked regimentally, and sent to him in a tin can, involving often a journey of over half a mile, with the result which can be imagined. With the concurrence of the doctors I carried out an experiment of the rations being drawn by the hospital authorities. Theoretically somebody had less one day and more next day, but practically the 500th part of a pound makes no difference in the messing arrangements, and the practice is now established.

In the Autumn I was asked, by the Commander-in-Chief's directions, if I wished to be considered for the Bombay Command.[1] The Adjutant-General, Viscount Wolseley, while unwilling to advise me, was clearly against my accepting, and so I respectfully declined.

[1] In discussing a possible successor to the Aldershot Command, he wrote, 6th October 1889: "It would be a real calamity to the Army that you should leave it."

I found no difficulty in reducing the number of sentries, except in the Mounted branches, and over the Hospitals, where our Conservative instincts were amusingly illustrated by the objections of Commanding officers and doctors. To my suggestion that one sentry would do to watch the horses of X, Y, and Z batteries Artillery, it was said, "No; 'Y' stablemen will steal the tackle of 'X'." I retorted, "But 'X' will have its chance next night, and so the result will be identical"; and up to my leaving Aldershot, four years later, no damage had resulted from the more reasonable arrangement, the Cavalry saving two-fifths, Artillery and Royal Engineers two-thirds of the night sentries.

I did not make up my mind about watchmen for stables until I had learnt the practice in London, where I again sent Colonel Gratton, who went round the buildings of several London Companies using a great number of horses, with the result that he found one watchman overlooking any number, from 230 up to 800.

The Senior Medical officer protested that the removal of a sentry from the Hospital gate would be attended with the worst results. I could not agree with him, but ordered the Army Hospital Corps to find the guard for the sentry, with the result that in a week's time the sentry was taken off by the Doctors, and has never since been replaced.

Soldiers were still doing the work of the General Post Office, so I communicated with the Secretary, who not only put collecting boxes in all the lines, but delivered letters at a central selected place in each Battalion.

Early in 1890 the issue of the .303 rifle, with its greatly increased trajectory, rendered the ranges at Ash unsafe, and some action essential. The greater part of the shooting of the Infantry was then done at Pirbright, where detachments occupied in succession huts which were, if possible, worse than those which housed the Aldershot Division. The Royal Engineers undertook work of considerable magnitude, the working parties employed on the Western slopes of the Fox Hills moving 260,000 cubic yards of soil, and the result has been very satisfactory; for whereas in 1889 the Range practices were necessarily extended for four months, the accommodation then provided enabled, two years later, an

increased strength of over 5000 to get through the course in thirty-one firing days, and the ranges, moreover, afforded facility for practice more like that occurring on service.

Before I joined, a Lecture had been given showing what might be done in improving the soldiers' meals, but no practical steps were taken until early in 1890, when I invited Colonel Burnett,[1] who had successfully tried in his Battalion what is now the Army system, to come to stay with me at Aldershot, and to give a Lecture. He demonstrated that the dripping alone in a Battalion of 1000 men is worth £200 per annum, and I became a warm supporter of his theories. One brigade took up the idea, and worked it successfully, becoming the pioneers to the rest of the Army.

I was attacked in an amusing weekly journal,[2] and derided as a mischievous busybody. Later, the Editor sent a Representative, who not only visited the School of Cookery, then at work under Lieutenant-Colonel Edward Hutton, but also questioned many of the Rank and File, and in the result, published a handsome apology, stating he believed the former assertions were based on information furnished by individuals interested in the bad old system.

The day after the German Emperor left Aldershot in 1889, I went to Churn, near Wantage, to inspect the Home Counties brigade, which had done well under Brigadier Lord Wantage, V.C., at the Review the day before, and I took the opportunity of riding over the Berkshire Downs, and discussing with the Brigadier the possibility of having some manœuvres for Cavalry in 1890. He met me with the greatest generosity, undertaking not to claim compensation for any damage done to his property, and he himself farmed on a large scale; moreover, as a considerate landlord, and as Lord-Lieutenant of the county, he had great influence, which was placed entirely at my disposal. No other landlord ever helped me so much to improve the Field-training of our troops; no man ever showed me and my Staff such

[1] Now Lieutenant-General C. J. Burnett, C.B.

[2] As indeed I have often been, but may say now that its statements, and awkward questions, have enabled me, since I became a General, to check many undesirable practices.

consistent generous hospitality as did Robert Lloyd Lindsay, V.C., Lord Wantage.

In the Spring of 1890 I examined the ground more closely, and sent round officers, who visited 142 tenants; and later, I obtained War Office sanction to my holding the Manœuvres, provided every landowner and tenant consented to troops passing over his land.

Early in 1890, after a full discussion with the five general officers serving under me, I changed, with their concurrence, our method of criticising the work done in tactical operations. The evidence of those taking part, as well as that of the umpire staff, which afforded information likely to prove of value in the future, was collected, and sifted on the spot, as in 1889, but the narrative and decision of the Umpire-in-chief was published next day.

On the 1st May I received a telegram from Sir William MacKinnon, urging me to go up to town next evening to dine with him at a welcome home to Henry Stanley, the Explorer, on his return from the expedition to succour Emin Pasha. I had known Sir William for many years, having been introduced to him by our common friend Sir Bartle Frere, who observed to me, "You should know MacKinnon, he has given us £10,000 to open a road through Uganda to the Lakes." I having heard that MacKinnon's business aptitude had created the British India Steamship Company, observed jokingly, "You do not expect, Mr. MacKinnon, that £10,000 will pay a dividend?" He said quietly, "No, never to me; but there is a great pleasure in having made enough money to be able to do something for the sake of those who come after us." I had known Mr. Stanley since 1873, when he had dined with me on Christmas Day at Prahsu, the boundary between Fanti and Ashantiland, when already in bearing, he showed the determination which distinguished him later as one of the most intrepid explorers of the Victorian Age. I had dined with Sir William MacKinnon at a Farewell dinner he gave, on the 19th January 1887, to Stanley ere he set out, when he talked to me about the officers to be employed under him, and regretted he had not consulted me before they were nominated.

He disappeared for three years; and on his return, MacKinnon telegraphed to me to come to London and redeem my promise to attend his Welcome Home dinner. This I did; and on the evening of the 1st May he walked into the room holding out his hand as if we had only separated the previous day, observing, "I have often thought of you. Do you remember what you said when we parted?" "Oh, I told you about the officers." "Yes," said he; "but you put to me a remarkable question which has often been in my mind. 'So you are going to look for Emin, is he worth the journey?' That interrogation has often recurred to me in my months of wanderings on Emin's trail."

Early in June I took advantage of two columns being at the south end of Woolmer Forest to practise Infantry making a Frontal Attack on Artillery in position. The Artillery umpires thought the Infantry would have been repulsed, while the Infantry were of opinion they would have carried the guns, though with considerable loss. This opinion was shared by my friend Major Comte Pontavice De Heussy, the French Military Attaché, himself a Gunner. It is interesting to recall the advance in breadth of Military knowledge. When two years later the Garrison at Aldershot had changed, I tried the identical Attack, with the sole difference that I placed Infantry officers as umpires with the guns, while Artillery officers accompanied the attacking Infantry; on this occasion the Gunners thought that the Infantry had succeeded, while the Infantry umpires thought that the guns had decidedly repulsed the Infantry.

In June I had a note from my friend Sir John Pender, saying that his wife was writing a Magazine article concerning soldiers, and would like to come to Aldershot for a short visit. It happened that Colonel Crease, Royal Marine Artillery, was with me, trying some Smoke balls which were to be thrown down by skirmishers to hide the advance of thicker lines. This experiment was in itself exciting, and against my will Lady Pender overtaxed her strength by undertaking a 24-mile drive in the afternoon, to visit the Gordon Boys' Home, near Bagshot. I tried to prevent her going, urging that she should lie down, for I saw what was not apparent to others, that she

was about to become seriously ill; but she persisted, and, to my deep regret, died a few days after her return to London.

During my Home Service I have practically never asked for leave of absence, contenting myself with sport available from my residence, but in July I asked for twelve days before the Cavalry Manœuvres. The Commanding officers required a few days in which they might exercise their units before proceeding to the manœuvre ground; and I was, moreover, although I did not anticipate the calamity which I was to suffer next year in losing my wife, anxious to give her the pleasure of attending the Passion Play at Ober-Ammergau, which is acted only once in ten years. I was just ten days out of office, and it is still a consoling recollection to me that I was able to afford my wife so much enjoyment. I do not think that she, or my daughter, although Catholics, appreciated the reverential representation of the simple-minded peasants more than I did as a Protestant. Indeed, the wonderful scenes appeal to every Christian, irrespective of his religious form of worship.

Soon after my return from Ober-Ammergau the Cavalry Division paraded, 3400 strong, prior to its marching to the Berkshire Downs, where I obtained permission from landlords and tenants to manœuvre over a tract of country 22 miles from east to west, with an average of $7\frac{1}{2}$ miles from north to south. Just before we were about to start I received a telegram from the farmers asking if the manœuvres might be postponed; so I proceeded to Ilsley on the Downs with my friend Colonel Sir Lumley Graham, who was then living at Arlington Manor, and arranged matters with the sheep farmers without any further postponement, which would have been unfortunate, as about the middle of September the weather in England generally breaks up. I had agreed to buy all articles in the district as far as it could produce them, on condition that for oats I was not to pay more than the London Corn Exchange price, plus freight, plus two shillings a quarter. One of my strong supporters, a tenant farmer, came to me a few days after the Cavalry had arrived at the camps of Concentration, and complained that his oats had been rejected. I had heard the story, and said, "Yes, my friend, but they were bought in Mark Lane by you, and I can tell you exactly what price you paid, and we never agreed to give you two shillings a

quarter plus freight for acting as a Buyer." He said naïvely, "I never thought that your officers could tell the difference in oats."

The Cavalry learned much on the Downs, in reconnaissance work, and in the fitting of saddlery and equipment, which can only be tried under service conditions. After the last day's work, in which Colonel John French,[1] 19th Hussars, showed considerable tactical skill, I rode with the Divisional Staff into Aldershot direct, the Cavalry returning in two marches.

We tried some interesting experiments in training Infantry as cyclists, and ascertained that men who had never ridden before, required two months' training to make them fairly expert, and to harden their bodies. Men can ride carrying rifle and ammunition and equipment, and average 8 miles an hour when travelling as a company, and can easily make 20 miles a day when moving in large bodies. The Irish Rifles Detachment on returning to Holyhead travelled 70 miles the first day, and 50 next day, without difficulty.

I was able to help materially the Auxiliary Forces during my time at Aldershot. I established the principle that the Auxiliaries being at Aldershot for a short time only, the Regulars were to give way to them as regards the use of ranges, and use of ground for tactical purposes. The result was a large increase in the number of applications to attend, thirteen battalions of Militia coming in my second year, instead of six, and eventually the applications for Volunteer Corps to train at Aldershot had to be checked by one of my successors, as more wished to come than the ground could accommodate.

Many Commanding officers thanked me, I quote two. Lord Wantage wrote: "This has been the best week's big drill that I ever remember. . . . I can assure you that the Volunteer Forces greatly appreciate the marked interest you take in their welfare." And the other: "I am a volunteer of thirty-three years' service, and thank you extremely for the interest you have shown in the Force, in which there has been a great and marvellous advance, in drill and attention to details."

[1] Now the General commanding at Aldershot.

I had been trying for several years to interest Directors of Railways in a scheme I had propounded for soldiers when proceeding on furlough, to be granted a Return ticket at single fare, but had no success until the middle of October, when I called on Mr. W. P. Dawson, the Managing Director of the Railway Clearing House, at Euston. I explained to him the importance of the question from a Recruiting point of view, and mentioned that prior to the embarkation of the Devon Regiment for Foreign Service, only eighty men had gone on furlough from Aldershot to Exeter, the double fare being prohibitive. Both Mr. Dawson, and Sir Miles Fenton, managing Director of the South-Eastern, and Mr. Charles Scotter, Managing Director of the South-Western, received my suggestion in a generous spirit; and from the 1st December the boon was conceded to soldiers, not only on these lines, but throughout Great Britain. In the following year I obtained a similar concession from the steamboat companies plying round the United Kingdom.

When I left the Aldershot Staff, eleven years earlier, although there were few outward breaches of discipline, yet officers and men agreed that more alcoholic liquor was consumed at Christmas than was desirable; and now being in command I encouraged officers to send their men on furlough for a week at Christmas, with the result that from 1890 onwards, about half the garrison spent the day at home.

CHAPTER XLVI

1891-2-3—TRAINING OF TROOPS ON PRIVATE LANDS

Death of Lady Wood—Manœuvres in Hampshire—Public Schools' Camps at Aldershot—Improvement in War Training—Ian Hamilton—Lord Roberts—Sealed patterns, Army Stores.

ON the 11th May I lost my wife, with whom I had enjoyed uninterrupted happiness since our marriage and who for twenty-four years, next to God, had given me all her life. The most loving and tender of women, endowed with the highest principles of morality, her companionship raised the standard of thought of even an ordinary man, increasing his respect for womankind, while her infinite compassion rendered her a hopeful and encouraging beacon to the weakest of her sex. She was to me not only an affectionate wife, but also adviser and confidential secretary. My greatest abiding regret is that devotion to the Army gave me so little time with her, and with our children; in seven successive years, employment on Foreign Service allowed me only 14½ months at home.

I had no suspicion of her being ill until one afternoon walking in the grounds of Government House she told me she felt an unpleasant fluttering in her heart; but we had suspected so little her dangerous state, that I had allowed her to walk up a steep hill in the previous June, when I particularly asked Lady Pender, whose face I was watching, to go up in the carriage.

In the month of November Lady Wood complained of eczema, and was in bed for a week; but she made so little of her ailments that I went almost daily to London to sit on a Drill Committee, engaged in revising a new book, and

when I was not in London I spent the day in office with Sir Mansfield Clarke and Colonel Hildyard, on the same duty. Ten days later my wife was sufficiently recovered to go about and look at houses, as it became necessary for us to turn out of Government House, which required repairs.

Early in the year Her Majesty the Empress Eugénie, whose kindness to us had been unceasing, since the journey in 1880 to Zululand, took Lady Wood and my eldest daughter to St. Remo for a change of air, I remaining ignorant of her precarious state of health until I received a note, written by the direction of the Empress, calling me to the Riviera.

The doctor at St. Remo told me frankly he thought very badly of Lady Wood's state, and advised me to take her back to England. I telegraphed for Surgeon-Major Finlay, who knew my wife's constitution, and he kindly hurried to St. Remo, meeting us, however, only at Paris, as we had left the Riviera before he arrived. The journey was exceptionally painful to me; I had not ventured to tell my young daughter what I feared, and the doctor had warned me that if my wife died in the carriage, which was possible, I should conceal the fact until we reached Paris to avoid removal from the train. After a week's rest in Paris we got back to Aldershot. Ten days before Lady Wood died I offered to telegraph for our eldest son, who was with his Battalion, Devon Regiment, in Egypt. She replied, "Certainly not, I will not be so selfish; let him come home later, and escape the hot weather."

Nothing could be more touching than the gracious solicitude of Her Majesty the Queen, who offered to come to Aldershot to see Lady Wood before she died, and the sympathy of my comrades of all Ranks. Her Majesty sent me a beautifully expressed letter of compassion; in thanking her I wrote it was the more acceptable as to her might appropriately be applied the line, "Non ignara mali miseris succurrere disco."

Friends in both Churches, the Catholic Bishop of Westminster, the Dean of Westminster, and soldiers' wives sent condolences to me. Forty-six non-commissioned officers and privates, living in different parts of Scotland, wrote to me in memory of our service together in South Africa in 1878–9.

Lady Wood had indeed done much for her poorer brothers and sisters. She was ever engaged in works of Charity,

irrespective of the religion of those she succoured; indeed, when at Colchester, she gave effective assistance to a lady of the Baptist persuasion, who managed a Soldiers' Home. My wife and daughter organised a series of weekly concerts in the Cambridge Hospital for convalescents, collecting sufficient money, mainly through our friend Lord Wantage, to buy a second-hand Grand piano, and they made a practice of spending one afternoon every week in the Hospital, inducing other ladies to do the same, so that every ward where there were female nurses, was visited by one or more ladies weekly. Lady and Miss Wood, with the aid of friends, supplied the Cambridge Hospital with invalid chairs, and many other such articles, not issued in those days by Government.

It was fortunate for me that at this particular time I was if possible more than usually engaged on Military duties. I was unable to sleep consecutively at night, and never after four in the morning, at which time, after leaving her for only an hour, I had been called to my wife's bedside to say goodbye. The day after the funeral, I supervised the training of an Infantry Brigade, and on the day following, the Cavalry, working consecutively eleven hours on the Drill book after my return to Government House. When I was not in London, and there were no troops training, after clearing my office table, I remained on horseback till sunset.

Throughout the Autumn of 1890, and during the Winter of 1890–91, I was looking for ground for manœuvres in North Hampshire, assisted by Captain Rycroft, 7th Dragoon Guards, with whose uncle I had been shipmate on H.M.S. *Queen*, and I had every assistance possible from the Rycroft family, and Mr. Portal, who not only gave me free use of his land, but assented to my using the meadows on his dairy farm for encampments. The Earl of Carnarvon was also most generous, allowing me to select as a camp for 6000 men, a field within 200 yards of where most of his pheasants were to be raised.

With landowners I had but little difficulty, but much of the land was let to shooting tenants who were non-resident in the county, and the objections of two I found it was impossible to overcome. Both gentlemen were courteous in the

extreme; one, the Head of a firm of prosperous drapers in Knightsbridge, told me frankly that he worked hard for ten months in the year, and that no compensation for disturbance of game would make up to him for less sport; and eventually I had to give up my scheme, trying then for ground between Basingstoke and Alresford, and when unsuccessful there, looking over more lands between Stockbridge and Winchester In both areas, however, there was considerable trouble in finding camping-places anywhere except on arable land, and the scarcity of water was a well-nigh insuperable difficulty; eventually I had to come back to a tract which I had looked at in 1890, about 7 miles from east to west, and 5 from north to south, lying between Butser Hill, Droxford, and West Meon, Hambledon. The clergy in the district were at first much opposed to the idea of seeing soldiers in their parishes, but eventually they all withdrew their objections, and after the manœuvres wrote to me in enthusiastic terms of the good conduct of our men. A week before Lady Wood died she rallied so remarkably as to enable me to go down to West Meon for a day, and fix the sites for the camps which we occupied in August. The Force employed consisted of two complete Infantry divisions; that is, each had a brigade of Artillery and a Squadron of Cavalry.

The men carried thirty-eight pounds weight besides the clothes they wore, and learnt a good deal marching down, some regiments more than others; as may be gained from the fact that with equivalent numbers 73 men fell out in one Battalion, and two in another. We learned also a good deal as regards the kits of soldiers, which can be tested only on Service or Manœuvres. The harvest was late, but I did not venture to delay the concentration about West Meon and Butser Hill, for fear of the weather breaking, and so we had the unusual spectacle of troops which had been engaged in tactical operations in the forenoon, reaping and stooking corn in the evening.

Eight days before we intended to return to Aldershot the weather broke, and after persevering for four days, the last forty-eight hours in incessant and heavy rain, we abandoned our scheme, and marched home, the men retaining the utmost good-humour in spite of their having lived for two days in

camps which were ankle-deep in mud. At the conclusion of the manœuvres I reported, "In tactical skill officers of all Ranks have improved in a very great degree; but the improvement in military spirit, in eagerness to learn, and to submit cheerfully to great physical discomfort, is even more remarkable, and this spirit reacts naturally on the lower ranks."

Although I did not propose to use private land for purposes of instruction in 1892, I spent the previous autumn in looking round for fresh ground, but came reluctantly to the conclusion, which I put officially on record, that in counties where the sporting rights are leased to non-residents, manœuvres are in the present state of Public feeling in the United Kingdom impossible without an Act of Parliament.

Although the tactical training of infantry in 1892 was confined to Flying Columns moving on the Government grounds in the vicinity of Aldershot, and to the exercise of a Cavalry Division, yet the opportunity of gaining instruction was eagerly taken advantage of by the Auxiliary Forces. A Division composed of the 13th and 14th Militia Brigades, each of five Battalions, came out for a month's training in July, and in August 16,000 Volunteers came into camp. There had been, I gathered, some disinclination in previous years to join us, but the written expression of gratitude I received from officers commanding for the instruction afforded, indicated that the efforts of the Staff had been appreciated.

In 1889 the Public School Volunteer Cadet Companies came out for a week in Berkshire, with a total strength of about 200. The following year the numbers dropped to 160; but in 1891 we encamped about 440 at Bourley, 3 miles west of Aldershot town. Some masters had demurred to allowing their pupils to come, until I wrote a circular letter to the effect that having two sons in school Volunteer Corps, I should have no objection to their attending under arrangements I contemplated, when the difficulty was waived; and in 1892 we encamped about 600 in the grounds of Government House, Aldershot. My friend Colonel Davis, commanding 3rd Royal West Surrey Regiment, lending me large marquees, each capable of seating about 360 persons.

I did not anticipate that every schoolboy who joined a

Cadet Corps would become professional soldiers, but I urged all should fit themselves early in life for the command of Volunteers; and my hopes have been thoroughly justified at Aldershot, for the movement under my successors' fostering care has continued to increase in popularity.

In 1890 I lost in Pall Mall the strenuous support of the Adjutant-General, Lord Wolseley, who had taken over the Irish Command, where he was eagerly practising what he had preached from the War Office. He wrote frequently to me: "Send me copies of your Military Training: how you carry it out, and indeed everything new you have introduced."[1]— And again: "I want to carry out your Night Manœuvres: have sent to me the orders you are giving this year." Lord Wolseley was succeeded as Adjutant-General by Redvers Buller, a friend of many years' standing, whom I personally recommended for the Victoria Cross in Zululand, and he also supported my views; thus my difficulties were practically at an end.

Moreover, the spirit of the troops at Aldershot had changed materially since 1889. The younger officers of the Brigade of Guards were always open to consider new ideas. One of its greatest enthusiasts for war training was Colonel Lord Methuen, who on the 21st August wrote to me: "You have given us the best five weeks' soldiering we ever had, and your work must do us permanent good. To-morrow night we have Night operations."

The march of opinion, however, is still more remarkably shown in a letter from General Sir George Higginson,[2] who as a guest had spent a week in camp with the Guards Brigade to the south of Aldershot. He wrote to me on the 5th September: "My recent opportunity of seeing your work has convinced me that the changes you and your colleagues have made, are not only justified, but imperatively called for, by the

[1] On the 2nd October 1891: "No man has in my time effected more useful Military work than you, and the Army is beginning to realise this as fully as I do."

[2] Such rigidity of movement was suitable to the smooth-bore musket, "Brown Bess," used in the Peninsular, armed with which our troops embarked for the East, in 1854, and which the 4th Division still carried at the Alma, as sufficient Minie rifles had not been issued to equip it. Unfortunately in the eighties all the Heads of the Army had not, like Higginson, appreciated the history of the Campaigns of 1866, 1870–71, and the bloody lessons around Plevna in 1877.

altered circumstances of modern warfare." This open-minded admission is the more remarkable, that Higginson was Adjutant of his battalion when, shoulder to shoulder, it took part in the brilliant and successful attack on the hill above the Alma River, and ever since had lived amongst men who inculcated and eulogised drill, which would enable battalions to "wheel like a wall and swing like a gate."

His Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught was also a warm supporter of modern ideas, and while serving on our drill committee, strenuously advocated more space in the ranks, and the delegation of control to section commanders.

Prior to the commencement of each drill season I recapitulated the most common mistakes made in the previous year, and thus to some extent avoided their repetition. At the end of the season, 1892, I drew up a paper relating to Artillery; it was my own compilation, but the technical part of it came either from Colonel James Alleyne, who was admittedly one of the best Field Artillery men in the Service, or from Colonel N. Walford, employed in the War Office, who was the most scientific Gunner I ever knew, and whose knowledge of the Arm was remarkable. From him I had the advantage of a frank criticism on every Artillery decision which I gave at Aldershot, for he paid me the compliment of differing from me whenever he thought I was in error.

I was corresponding with Colonel Ian Hamilton,[1] then in India, on Musketry questions, and I sent him my paper on Artillery, dated 24th September 1892, with the result that Lord Roberts circulated it to the Artillery in India, Ian Hamilton writing: "I don't think he has before received a paper on this subject which has so absolutely carried him along with it." Five years later, when I was Adjutant-General, I got Ian Hamilton home, to take over the School of Musketry at Hythe, from the conviction that to his effort was due the great improvement of our soldiers' rifle shooting in India.

I took advantage of a rest day in the Cavalry manœuvres of 1890 to ride over the Down land between Swindon and the River Kennet, and in the winter of 1892–93 I revisited the ground, and got permission from the Earl of Craven to

[1] Now Lieutenant-General Sir Ian Hamilton, K.C.B., Southern Command.

address all his tenants, and he gave me the free access to his estate, much of which was in his personal occupation. I obtained the use of 11 miles from east to west, with a mean of 5½ from north to south, on which some useful work was done. One day we practised a frontal attack, having 15,000 troops on the ground.

It is interesting to record that the Rector of Liddington, unsolicited by anyone, wrote that "in spite of his Rectory being practically surrounded by camps, neither he nor his family experienced even a shadow of inconvenience."

I reported that the mistakes made by the officers were fewer, and were more readily acknowledged at the discussions on the conclusion of each tactical exercise. I added, "These conferences have been very useful in the improvement of our battle training. These, however, are by no means the only advantages obtained for the Army; such manœuvres induce officers to study their profession more keenly than they otherwise would do, and the inhabitants of the districts visited have now, I am confident, an increased respect for the Army as a Training school for the nation." The cost of the manœuvres was £7200.

In the Spring I was asked to choose a course for the Divisional Point to Point races, and Captain Norton Legge,[1] on a somewhat indifferent horse, won the Light-weight race from his attention to the instructions, which I printed, and handed round to every rider, besides the verbal explanation. Mr. Harris of Westcourt, Finchampstead, who had always provided foxes for us in his covert near Hook Station, gave me the use of his land. I pointed out to the riders a church in the distance, telling them they had to pass by east and north to the west of the church, on rounding which they would see a balloon in the air, and if they rode straight for the church going out, and the balloon coming home, I would be answerable there would be no wire or unjumpable fences in the line. Legge, an excellent officer, rode absolutely straight, and consequently won.

The new Ranges at Aldershot enabled us to hold the Army Rifle meeting there, causing a great increase in Regi-

[1] Killed in the Boer War.

mental Rifle clubs. At the Annual meeting there were 2000 individual entries, and a large number of teams.

Besides the tactical exercises carried out against the Field columns, which as in 1889 marched round Aldershot using Government ground or commons, we had a useful practice for the first time in mobilising a Divisional ammunition column, which was made up to war strength by borrowing men and horses from Batteries. We learnt a great deal in the packing arrangements of the boxes, and in so marking them as to be recognisable at night, when on service much of the replenishing of ammunition columns has necessarily to be effected. All the Artillery officers showed great interest in this practice, which so far as I know had not been previously attempted.

In the last few months of my Command the Administrative Staff had a lesson from my ingrained habit of looking into details. A new form of lamp chimney had been for some time under trial, and all the reports were unanimous in its favour. A letter to this effect was put before me for signature by an officer, whom I asked, "Have you personally tried the chimnies?" "No, but the Reports are unanimous in its favour." "Well, I'll wait a day or two." "Please, sir, we've had one reminder already, and the Director of Contracts is anxious for a Report." I declined to be hurried, but invited the Staff officer to dine that evening. After dinner I said, "Come for a stroll," and we walked over to the nearest barracks, and asked some men sitting at the tables: "How do you like those lamp chimnies?" "Very well; we don't pay much for them." "Pay, to whom do you pay?" "To Messrs. T. White & Co." "What, for the hire?—where is the Government new pattern?" "Oh, sir, locked up in the Quartermaster's store; we can't use them, as so many break."

In my first year of command Mr. Garth's hounds drew all the Government woods blank. I sent for the Warders and informed them that if it occurred again they would all be changed round;—that is, those on the East would go to the West, and those in the North would go to the South of Aldershot. Lord Cork was kind enough to send me some cubs from his estate, and I kept them in a large enclosure with an artificial earth until they were old enough to work their way out. We

seldom found less than a leash, but in my time never succeeded in killing one.

The days the cubs were delivered Major Burn Murdoch, Royal Dragoons, calling to see me about five o'clock, asked if he might speak to me. "Yes, you can talk to me while I am engaged in a sporting operation, and as you are also very fond of it, here you are, snip this one's ears." He said with much adroitness: "Certainly, General, if you hold him!" The Master, Mr. Garth of Haines Hill, who hunted the hounds for nearly half a century, wrote to me on my departure in the autumn from Aldershot: "I thank you for all you have done, which is a very great deal, while at Aldershot for the Fox hounds."

I left Aldershot for Pall Mall in October, having satisfied my two friends, Sir Redvers Buller and Viscount Wolseley, to whose advocacy I owed my appointment; Redvers Buller told me at the time, and repeated his pleasant remark when he went to command at Aldershot in 1897. Lord Wolseley wrote to me as follows: "You have not only taught men a great deal, but have managed to popularise the acquisition of military knowledge."

I wrote to the Adjutant-General in my final Report that "The success obtained was due to the excellent spirit prevailing in all Ranks, and to the careful and unceasing labours of the Staff of the Aldershot Division. These officers, by their knowledge, energy, and loyal assistance, have relieved me of all details of work, and have thus enabled me to devote my attention to the Field training and Tactical instruction of the troops"; and in a farewell order I recorded my thorough appreciation of the sustained zeal with which soldiers of all Ranks had seconded my efforts in preparing the Division for the duties of active Field Service.

CHAPTER XLVII

1893–6—QUARTERMASTER-GENERAL

Prime Warden, Fishmongers' Company—Archbishop Vaughan—Mr. John Ropes—Visit to Gibraltar—An economy of £2300 per annum—Visit to the Crimea—Reform for soldiers travelling to their homes—I make large saving of public monies—Mr. Arthur Balfour's good temper.

I BECAME Quartermaster-General to the Forces on the 9th October 1893, and two months later the Commander-in-Chief offered me the appointment of Governor of Malta, which I respectfully declined.

The years 1893–4 were fully occupied, for I undertook a certain amount of literature, which I got through by rising before daylight; and in June I became Prime Warden of the Fishmongers' Company, which I had joined as a Liveryman in 1874. His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales was graciously pleased to dine with the Company, in recognition of my assuming office. The Prime Warden is by custom and practice allowed to select guests at one of the annual dinners, and I chose a company of fox-hunters. Thirty-five masters of hounds, headed by the Duke of Beaufort, and upwards of 200 sportsmen, the oldest being Mr. J. Crozier, who hunted the Blencathra foxhounds for sixty-four years, dined with the Company.

Archbishop Vaughan, with whom I was on friendly terms, invited me to join a committee for the management of an establishment for preparing Catholic young gentlemen for the army, as neither the Catholic clergy nor the parents were satisfied with the liberty accorded, in most of the establishments in and about London, to a young man just emancipated from school. I declined at first, pointing out that although the Cardinal and my friends knew my views were liberal

about religion, earnest Catholics might object to arrangements made by a Protestant. He retorted, however, that that was his concern, and urged me to help him. This I did, although I predicted that the scheme could not answer financially, as there were an insufficient number of Catholic candidates for the army, and my forecast proved later on to be accurate. With the exception of one, Lord Edmund Talbot, the Cardinal asked me to nominate the Committee, and I suggested Sir Arthur Herbert, who afforded the Cardinal much assistance, and generally agreed with my views as against those of the Religious, who were inclined to attempt inculcation of Religion, with more restriction on liberty than young men were willing to accept.

I made the acquaintance of Mr. Ropes, the historian, in July, and, in asking him to give me the pleasure of his company at dinner at the Army and Navy Club, I mentioned a somewhat remarkable circumstance. In the previous month I had gone with three friends—Dr. Norman Moore, of St. Bartholomew's; Mr. Witham, head of the firm of Witham, Roskell & Co., Solicitors; and Major May, Royal Artillery—over the field of Waterloo, and on leaving Brussels it transpired that each one of us had a copy of "Ropes' *Waterloo*."

Mr. Ropes dined with me, and must have enjoyed his evening, for I, liking early hours, excused myself at 12.30 a.m. the following morning, asking General Sir Frederick Maurice, who was a member of the Club, to take my place as host, and I learnt next day the two authors were still discussing Grouchy's proceedings after the battle of Ligny at 2 a.m. when the Club closed.

I had much correspondence in 1896[1] with Mr. Ropes, when I published books entitled *Cavalry at Waterloo*, and *Cavalry Achievements*.

In August Sir John Pender invited Lords Wolseley, Portsmouth, and Kelvin, Sir John Mowbray, Sir John Ardagh, Mr. Bayard, the American Ambassador, and me to join him in a visit to the Crimea,—I at Lord Wolseley's request acting as guide to the party over the battlefields. I described the trip,

[1] He wrote to me from Boston, U.S.: "These two books give descriptions which are realistic and modern. In my judgment, you are quite alone in this, and also in giving unbiassed descriptions of facts."

however, in *The Crimea, 1854–94*, and say nothing more about it, except that the Governor of Sevastopol and all the officers received us with the greatest courtesy.

Our Consul, Captain Murray, gave us a curious piece of information,—that the Artillery horses during the winter in the Crimea never left their stables even for exercise. I was back again at work in Pall Mall within a month, and early in November visited Gibraltar on duty.

The expenditure of hired transport on the Rock was greater than appeared essential, and finding no satisfactory result was obtainable from correspondence with the Governor, I went to consult him on the spot, taking out with me Colonel Grattan, who had done so much to help me in initiating reforms at Aldershot. On arrival I explained to His Excellency that I was confident he did not know what was going on, and asked him if he would like the assistance of Colonel Grattan as President of a committee of investigation. After some consideration he accepted my offer, and I enjoyed a very pleasant week as his guest, seeing the fortifications of the Rock, the country in its vicinity, and the Calpe hounds. The result of Colonel Grattan's researches was that a saving of £2300 a year was effected.

After my return from the Crimea I published some reminiscences in the *Fortnightly Review*, afterwards expanded into the book entitled *The Crimea, 1854–94*. I described my first fighting Chief, Captain (afterwards Sir) William Peel, and one of my friends, who was staying in a house in which Lord Peel was visiting, wrote on the 12th October: "The Speaker says the portrait of his brother, which you have given in the article (*Fortnightly*), is the best thing he has ever read; the description of his face and figure is lifelike."

All through 1894–5 I began work at daylight, doing most of my writing before breakfast, and visiting that year every barrack in the United Kingdom; and I made several journeys in search of Artillery practice grounds, visiting Church Stretton, in Shropshire, and many other places.

There had been much trouble with the drainage of the Portsmouth Barracks, which are just on high-water level,

causing an acrimonious correspondence with the Municipal Authorities, which resulted in the War Office arranging with the Treasury to withhold the voluntary Treasury contribution paid in lieu of Rates. At the same time the Admiralty was pressing the War Office to surrender, for a consideration, the site of Anglesey Barracks, and a part of the ground on which the Military Hospital stood.

Money for a new Hospital, though allotted, had not been expended, on account of drainage difficulties; for although the Army Medical Department had accepted a site adjoining Hilsea Barracks, there is but little fall from the site, which is practically on the same level as Southsea Common. I pointed out this difficulty, and suggested the new Hospital should be built on the lower slopes of Portsdown Hill, a site which, so far as I know, is now universally approved. Although at first the Medical officers objected to my suggestion, that the site was too far from the Barracks, on my pointing out that an electric tram service passes the site many times daily it was agreed that the additional distance was of no importance.

At the end of 1894 I began work on a reform fraught with great advantages to soldiers, besides saving the country £10,000 or £12,000 a year.

Eight "long-voyage troopships," and H.M.S. *Assistance*, used between the Home Ports, were paid off in 1894, and the question arose whether she should be replaced by another Man-of-war. This doubt enabled us to reconsider the method of conveying the troops throughout the United Kingdom. We had contracts with twenty-one lines of Coasting steamers, and parties both large and small were sent by sea and by land even where it was possible to make the entire journey by rail, if the mixed journey was any cheaper than the direct route; thus soldiers were sent from York by rail to Hull, then thence by sea to London, and by rail to Aldershot.

There was covering authority that in very inclement weather soldiers might travel direct, but as weather at sea cannot be forecasted at an inland station, troops practically always travelled by the cheapest route. Moreover, delays ensued from steamers failing to keep time, and as a rule, there being only deck accommodation, the discomfort involved was so great that £4000 annually was paid by soldiers sent home

from the Discharge Depôt at Gosport in order to travel direct. The whole sum paid by soldiers averaged, according to the Accountant-General, £15,000 a year, and this argument he adduced later as a reason against approving of my proposition.

Major Lawson,[1] one of my assistants, at my request worked up the subject, my primary object being to help the soldiers, and in 1895 I obtained permission to endeavour to arrange terms with the Railway Companies of Great Britain. The existing Statutory rates had never been revised since the Act of Parliament was passed in the inception of railways, and on the 11th of March I opened negotiations with Sir Charles Scotter, of the London and South-Western, and Mr. Harrison, of the London and North-Western Companies, which carried most of the military traffic. I undertook, if the Railway companies reduced their rates to what I thought fair, the War Office would abandon the Coast-wise routes, and send troops direct by Rail; and that if special rates were given for the movement of Mounted troops we would, when convenient, use Railways for them.

The managers received my representations favourably, and after obtaining certain statistics from our records, which I got placed at their disposal, I met a deputation of Railway gentlemen on the 14th January 1896. At this meeting I stated I had regarded the matter not as one for making a hard bargain, but as one of friendly arrangement, and that I would make no proposition which I could not as a Director acting for shareholders accept. A schedule of rates prepared by Major Lawson, R.E., was handed to the managers for consideration, and after Examination was practically accepted.

We had many meetings, all the preparation for which, with the necessary calculations, were made by Lawson, who instructed me, as a solicitor does Counsel, before going into court. There was a great advantage in talking to business men with acute minds, for after they saw my proposals would help them as well as the soldiers no difficulty arose. The Secretary for State backed me thoroughly, and the new procedure came into operation on the 1st July. We got concessions of rates for small numbers to the value of 11 per centum, and for numbers over 25, 50 per centum. When troops over

[1] Now Brigadier-General H. Lawson, C.B.

that number were temporarily moved from a permanent station to a Camp of exercise and back within three months, the charge was to be a single fare for the double journey. Mounted troops were carried at a rate which brought the cost somewhat cheaper than the billeting money of troops marching, saving the wear and tear of horse flesh. There was also an incidental gain, lessening Billeting, a custom disliked by soldiers as it is by publicans.

I was, however, more anxious to lessen the hardships of the soldier than to save money for the State. On discharge, or transfer to the Reserve, he could only get the fare to his selected place of residence if it was no farther than the place where he had been enlisted, having to pay any excess. Moreover, this question constantly entailed irritating queries; for as a soldier went away after serving between five and seven years as a general rule, the Adjutant had in every case been changed, and small mistakes involving only a question of 2s. and less caused correspondence extending over months. The difficulty of estimating the soldier's journey home was accentuated by the fact that it had to be calculated by the cheapest routes. With the new Rates we send a soldier free by rail to his selected place of residence. This put £15,000 per annum into the pockets of the soldiers, and saves an appreciable sum in salaries of clerks for correspondence.

I asked Lord Lansdowne to obtain from the Treasury £3000 per annum, undertaking to save £12,000 per annum in perpetuity, but the Financial representative on the Council, after I had completed my arrangements, suggested that the boon to the soldiers should not be granted until the £12,000 had been brought into account. To this Lord Lansdowne did not assent, and I had the satisfaction of saving on the rates alone £14,000 the first year, and I believe there is still an annual saving of over £10,000, in addition to the saving to the Navy Estimates in doing away with the Home Port Troopship.

I failed in the same matter in Ireland, being handicapped by the fact that the "Cheap Rates Act" does not apply to that country, nor do the conditions of military life in Ireland lend themselves to the use of Coastwise journeys.

It is strange that while we made the life of the soldier wretched by sending him by the cheapest and most uncomfort-

able route, for on board the steamer he had to provide his own provisions, his Rifle from Weedon, his coat from Pimlico were sent by rail, the Army Ordnance Department, being allowed to send their stores as they liked, while the expense was debited to the Department administered by the Quartermaster-General. When I ascertained this fact, in spite of considerable opposition which lasted many months, I got the system reversed, undertaking the stores should be in time, and making the Army Service Corps responsible for all duties formerly carried out by carriers.[1] We thus saved £8000 per annum in commissions, and succeeded in reducing freightage charges from £82,515 in 1893–4, about £10,000 annually till 1896–7, when I vacated the appointment, when they stood at £63,873.[2]

This was not, however, the limit of the economies effected, for the new Railway rates enabled us to save in land transport for manœuvres alone about £13,000 in 1896.[3]

While I tried to save money on estimates, I pressed for some Expenditure which I considered essential. Many writers on the Recruiting problem have dwelt on the deterrent effect, on Recruits of the better class, by the faulty arrangements for Night urinals in Barracks, which after "lights out" were in Cimmerian darkness. The Accountant-General opposed my proposal for Night lights, showing the initial outlay in the United Kingdom alone would amount to £3000, and the annual cost to £2000. When, however, at an Army Council, I described from personal experience with Naturalistic accuracy the state of a corner tub in a Barrack room or

[1] Parliamentary Debates—16th March 1896. Supply in Committee—Army Estimates 1897:—"The Quartermaster-General, Sir Evelyn Wood, has in the last two years produced an annual saving of £21,000, on a not very large vote, by systematising transport of stores." And again, 12th February 1897:—"Sir Evelyn Wood has succeeded in making arrangements to send soldiers by the shortest route, and to give the discharged soldier free conveyance to his selected place of residence."

[2] "Despite these concessions, by a most careful economy in conveyance of stores, etc., Sir Evelyn Wood shows a reduction on the vote apart from special services on the manœuvres. The Vote was £329,000 in 1895–6, £309,000 in 1896–7, and £281,000 in the present year. This is, I think, peculiarly satisfactory."

[3] Supply, 19th February 1897. Mr. Powell Williams, Financial Secretary, in reply said: "With regard to Land Transport, a sum of £13,000 had been saved under this head, owing to the Quartermaster-General having made satisfactory arrangements with the Railway Companies."

passage, in the early morning, Lord Lansdowne's sympathetic feeling for soldiers induced him to side with me, against his Financial advisers, and one great improvement was effected.

He backed my views also against two of my colleagues on the Army Board, who argued that my scheme for issuing Government horses to mounted officers was not required; both my colleagues were rich, and had not the power of putting themselves in sympathy into the position of poor officers. The concession was made for Cavalry at once; but as the Commander-in-Chief, on the advice of the Inspector-General of Cavalry, made it optional, the boon was, as I officially predicted, never accepted by a subaltern. For several years the only horses, taken over at the annual payment of £10, were issued to Captains, who could disregard Regimental feeling. The Boer War has since made us more sensible in many ways.

To Lord Lansdowne's appreciation of the requirements of land for training soldiers, the purchase of a block 15 by 5½ miles, on Salisbury Plain, is due. When he sent me to report on it, a ride of five hours in a blizzard which froze my moustache made me realise the accuracy of those who describe it as the coldest place in England.

Although I was working hard, I do not wish it to be understood that I was having no amusement.[1] I took my sixty-one days' leave in the hunting field, or shooting, keeping my horses at Ongar, in Essex, about twenty-five miles from London; and my brother-in-law, Sir Thomas Lennard, for whom I was still supervising the management of an estate in Ireland, kept up the shooting of his Belhus estate for my pleasure. It is worthy of remark that on the 28th November the beaters put out of an osier bed, only eighteen miles from the General Post Office, a buck, a fox, many pheasants, a covey of partridges, and some wild duck.

It was often alleged during the South African War that the Army Staff had made no provision for it, and had given little or no thought to the subject prior to the outbreak of war. I give therefore an extract from my journal: "2nd January

[1] Extract from Diary: 10.1.96—Up at 4 a.m. Left St. Pancras by 1st train.

1896.—Worked in the office all day; nothing but work. Prepared a Division and a Brigade of Cavalry on paper." In the Autumn of 1896 I induced the General Officer commanding in South Africa, by private correspondence, to propose a form of contract for providing Army Transport, and got one of a Firm of contractors to come to the War Office, where we discussed a scheme, the acceptance of which I recommended. The Financial side of the office made many and various objections. I, however, so persistently urged the matter that the Secretary of State consulted the Secretary of State for the Colonies, but I was told no action need be taken. One of the reasons alleged against doing anything to provide for the emergency which arose three years later was that the Boers might hear what we were doing, to which I replied: "That would certainly make for Peace."

When I failed to get a transport contract, being apprehensive of the immobility of the garrison at Ladysmith, I recommended, in 1897, that a reserve of two months' food should be maintained constantly at that Station. This was also refused.[1]

On the 17th of April 1897 I begged the Commander-in-Chief to press for Regimental transport being provided for all units in South Africa, equal to carriage of ammunition, tents, baggage, and two days' rations, and again urged that the contract I had suggested should be made at once.

At the same time, foreseeing there must be delay in providing horse fittings for transports, about which I had been in constant communication with the Director of Transports, going on several occasions to Liverpool and other ports to look at different vessels, I urged but in vain an immediate expenditure of £25,000 to obviate the delay which, as I foresaw, occurred two years later. Lord Wolseley warmly supported these suggestions for outlay at the present time, in order to save larger sums in the future.

I wrote at the time to the Secretary of State: "No doubt we must fight the Boers unless they become more reasonable." I asked for £36,000 to replace horses we handed over to the

[1] See pp. 16, 17, *Official History of the War in South Africa*, 1899–1902. By Major-General Sir Frederick Maurice, K.C.B.

Chartered Company, and for Mounted Infantry, and urged that one company should be mounted in each Battalion in South Africa. I pointed out that we should require six mules for every seven men in the Field.

I learnt to cycle, which added greatly to my recreation, for after I was fairly proficient I cycled down to Aldershot or into Essex, about the same distance, on Saturday afternoons, returning for an eight o'clock breakfast on the Monday morning. Before I left London in 1901, I had cycled over 2000 miles in twelve months; but did not attain this facility without some adventures. The first, when I was learning, occurred from a collision with a hansom cab-horse, which was moving just out of a trot on the Edgeware Road at eight o'clock on a Sunday morning. Without any warning the driver turned his horse suddenly as I passed him at a short distance, and the horse's head struck my arm so violently, as I put it up to save my face, that the arm was marked by the animal's teeth, and I was thrown from the centre of the road to the far curbstone, leaving the cycle under the horse's feet, in the wheel of which they remained imprisoned until we got a blacksmith to cut the spokes away. The driver was greatly relieved when I told him he had better complete the job by driving me home, for, as he admitted, " I thought I had killed you."

When I was still in the learning stage, going past the Mansion House I collided with the shoulder of an omnibus horse, and the impact sent me under the fore-feet of another, for the busses were moving in two lines; the driver pulled up very smartly, and I escaped without even damaging a new cyclometer, my anxiety for which caused me to pick it up ere I scrambled from my perilous position.

This accident was my own fault, but the following curious one was not contributed to by me in any way. I was going eastwards one evening from Hyde Park Corner, intending to turn up Hamilton Place. The traffic being stopped, I was just moving the pedals, close in to a four-wheeled cab, when a driver of a hansom coming down fast looked over my head; the hansom's off-wheel, grazing my knee, took the cycle away from underneath me, carrying it seventy yards before the driver could pull up. Strange as it may seem, whereas on being

touched I was facing eastwards, the result was to land me on my feet in the road facing westwards. The cabman admitted to the Commissioner of Police it was entirely his fault, and that he, not looking down, failed to see me.

On the 8th May I had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Arthur Balfour for the first time, at a Newspaper and Press Fund dinner, and was struck with the good humour in which he accepted a quick reply I gave him. I was speaking: "It is a common expression, gentlemen, that the Press has improved in the last fifty years, but we are all more tolerant. I recall the time when the leading club in London ceased to take in the leading newspaper because it disapproved of the letters of its War correspondent in the Crimea, who, by describing our untold miseries, saved the remnant of our army."

I hear acutely when there is a noise, and my speech being favourably received, my ears were unduly sensitive, so I heard Mr. Balfour say in a low, quiet inquiring voice: "Dear me, I wonder which club?" Putting up my hand so that all the room should not hear it, I replied, "Carlton," which name was received by a burst of laughter by those near, in which Mr. Balfour joined, but with a gesture to the shorthand writers I prevented it being reported.

I had the pleasure on the 26th June of seeing my youngest son win the Riding prize at Sandhurst. The second son won it in 1892, and I had hoped that the eldest one would have succeeded in carrying it off in 1890, but unfortunately he had a riding accident three months before the competition.

In the Spring of the year Sir Redvers Buller, the Adjutant-General, came into my office, which was nearly opposite his room, and, for him an unusual custom, told a story, in the course of which he said: "And then they all became silent and listened attentively." I interupted him by the line—

"Conticuere omnes, intentique ora tenebant.

And he capped it at once by repeating—

"Inde toro pater Aeneas sic orsus ab alto
Infandum, Regina, jubes renovare dolorem."

I observed: "You don't know what you are quoting." "Yes, I do; you quoted the first line of the second book of the

Aeneid, and I the second and third lines; and in the Virgil we used at Eton it is on the right-hand side of the page when you open the book."

This proof of memory is more remarkable than my own, as I had re-read Virgil in 1857 for pleasure, and in 1869 before being entered as a student for the Bar.

All through 1896–7 I was urging on my Political Masters the importance, for the solution of our Recruiting difficulty, of reserving for discharged sailors and soldiers, fully qualified educationally and by character, the first claim on all vacant appointments in the Public service.

Lord Lansdowne and Mr. Brodrick warmly supported my representations. The Post Office met our views to some extent, and other Departments to about half the vacancies.

CHAPTER XLVIII

1897–90—ADJUTANT-GENERAL

The Duke of Connaught's generous letter—A Dargai Piper at a Music Hall—Consecration of the Colours of Catholic battalions—Lord Chesham's Yeomanry—Major Milton—Influence of British Officers over Asiatics—I offer to serve under Buller—Strange requests—The Misses Keyser—Colonel Hay—300 guns added to the establishment—A heavy fall—An appreciation of our Infantry.

I WAS appointed Adjutant-General on the 1st October 1897, and received many kind letters of congratulation; one from His Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught gratified me much, for he wrote: "I am heartily glad to see your appointment, and rejoice that now we shall make progress in our War training."

On my first day in office I submitted a memorandum, which I had had printed in anticipation, to the Commander-in-Chief, pointing out the absolute inadequacy of our forces. For years we had been adding to our Possessions, and consequently to our Responsibilities, without any increase to the army. Lord Lansdowne accepted my proposal for raising a Chinese battalion for Wei-hai-wei, and one of Yaos for British Central Africa, but this was only a small local increase.

In the time of my predecessor Gibraltar and Malta had been treated as Home battalion stations in the Link system,—that is, recruits were posted to units in those garrisons, and the older soldiers were drafted to India and to such sub-tropical stations as were barred, by Medical regulations, to lads only eighteen years of age. Neither of these Mediterranean garrisons were satisfactory training schools, and I strongly urged a substantial increase in Infantry, writing: "The march of events does not foreshadow any diminution of British soldiers on the African Continent, I beg that 9000 more be

added to the army." On the 3rd November Lord Wolseley, supporting my demands of the previous month, added 4000 men to my estimate of what was required.

All through the hunting season of 1897–8 I enjoyed occasional days' relaxation, keeping my horses as in previous years in a farm near the residence of my friend Mr. H. E. Jones of Ongar. I did not allow my favourite amusement, however, to interfere with duty, as may be seen from one entry in my diary: "27th January 1898—Hunted with the Union Hounds. Worked after dinner till midnight."

In the Spring of the year I conducted a Staff ride in Essex, with the General Idea which was followed in 1904.

Towards the end of May a piper who had been awarded the Victoria Cross for gallantry shown at Dargai was advertised to appear on the stage of the Alhambra. On the morning of the 28th, before going to Mr. Gladstone's funeral at Westminster Abbey, I saw Mr. Dundas Slater, the manager, and induced him to cancel the "turn" after that week. Mr. Slater behaved with the greatest consideration, and on my telling him we would be responsible for the man's salary for a week, amounting to £30, he said laughingly: "It is scarcely worth while, sir, to talk about that, when I have spent £300 in advertising him."

Earlier in the year my attention had been drawn to the hardship to battalions which were practically all Catholics in having their colours consecrated by Protestant clergy. The general officer in command in Ireland felt the incongruity, and asked, in the case of a West of Ireland Regiment, that the ceremony should be performed by a Roman Catholic priest. This was not thought desirable, and afterwards, indeed, the request was cancelled as the officers, who were nearly all Protestants, objected.

With the permission of the Secretary of State I took up the question with the Chaplain-General, who afforded me the most valuable assistance, drawing out a form of prayer for the consecration of Colours of all Denominations. I sent it to my friend Cardinal Vaughan, writing I would call in a week, at the end of which time he approved generally, and I sent a copy in print. Some of those about him objected to one or two expressions in the prayers which they thought would not

be acceptable to Catholics, and those the Cardinal altered. They were, however, slight, and I had no difficulty in accepting them on the part of the Secretary of State; but as I pointed out to the Cardinal, the prayers submitted to him were taken literally from those in use in the reign of Henry VII., before England became Protestant.

In the following year, when I was still pursuing the matter, I crossed over to Ireland and saw the Primate, Cardinal Logue, and Archbishop Walsh, both of whom approving the copy, thanked me for my efforts in removing what was felt to be a grievance; and now the form of Consecration of Colours is printed as a War Office document, for the correct use of which the Senior officer present is responsible.

In the early summer I saw the Buckingham Yeomanry under the command of Colonel Lord Chesham. He showed 469 men on parade, who worked in a way which, considering the short training they had received, could only be described as wonderful.

In August I went to Salisbury Plain for ten days, hiring a farmhouse at Durrington, in which I lived while watching Cavalry manœuvres under General G. Luck, Inspector-General of Cavalry, who was working a Division of 2800 sabres. He thought that our regiments were wanting in uniformity of pace and cohesion, which opinion corresponded exactly with that expressed by the German officers nine years previously in the Aldershot review before the Emperor. This is not extraordinary, as we had never worked a Division as such before I obtained the gratuitous use of private ground in 1890.

After leaving Salisbury Plain I went on to Chilmark Rectory in Wiltshire, which I had hired for the Commander-in-Chief and his Staff, whence he supervised manœuvres between Army Corps commanded by H.R.H. The Duke of Connaught and General Sir Redvers Buller.

All through August the office work which was sent to me daily while away from Pall Mall was hard, practically all day on the 3rd and 4th of the month, for we were considering affairs in South Africa. It seemed to be certain that war must ensue unless Mr. Kruger abated his menacing tone.

In the forenoon, 8th September, Lord Lansdowne desired me not to leave the office, for I had told him I was going

away for twenty-four hours to shoot in Essex, and at 4 o'clock he gave me the order to put four Battalions under orders for the Cape. This involved the moving of seven: three from England to the Mediterranean; three going on from the garrisons there; while one went direct from England to South Africa. Staff officers on the Continent are not troubled with considerations which have to be borne in mind by the Headquarters Staff of our little army, for when Battalions are ordered abroad, many questions arise other than War Service. Corps have to be selected which have been longest in England, and are due to go abroad in their regular rotation, the selection of course being tempered by the question of efficiency, which, speaking generally, may be taken as the efficiency of the Lieutenant-Colonel and Senior officers. Nevertheless, the seven Battalions were selected and placed under orders in forty-five minutes.

I had heard privately, as well as officially, from the Cape that while in certain regiments, such as the King's Royal Rifles, no difficulty had been experienced in utilising the ponies we had supplied for the training of a Company of each Battalion as Mounted Infantry, yet in some Corps no progress had been made owing to the officers' want of experience in equitation and in the management of horses. We sent out therefore, six weeks before mobilisation, Major Milton,[1] Yorkshire Light Infantry, and Captain E. M. FitzG. Wood,[2] Devonshire Regiment, who were known to be good horse-masters, to teach the Company officers, so that they might instruct their men.

On the 21st October I telegraphed to my second son, Lieutenant C. M. Wood, at Wei-hai-wei, whose battalion was on its way to the Cape, suggesting that he should ask for leave, and rejoin. He had been some time in the Chinese regiment, and had no difficulty in obtaining five months' leave of absence. On the 22nd, when he got authority from

[1] Major Milton was not only a clever instructor, but a first-class fighting man, who always carried his troops to the Front. The two companies under his command at Belmont, on the 10th November 1899, lost two officers killed and two wounded, and when he fell, showing a grand example, on the 11th December, the three companies under him, comprising 13 officers, had lost six killed and six wounded. Captain E. M. FitzG. Wood being the only surviving Duty officer who had served with Major Milton throughout the month's operations.

[2] My eldest son, now Major and D.S.O., Royal Dragoons.

his Commanding officer to go, he left within three hours, obtaining a passage on H.M.S. *Brisk*, commanded by Captain Bouchier Wrey, who had been attached to my Staff in Egypt in 1882, to Shanghai, where he caught a liner, and reaching his battalion after the action at Stormberg, became Adjutant, the offer of which had been telegraphed by the Commanding officer to him while he was on his journey.

The influence British officers obtain over soldiers of Eastern races is remarkable; his Chinese servant begged to be permitted to accompany him, and the senior Sergeant of his Company implored to be allowed to revert to Private, and go as his servant.

My third son, who had been invalided from the Tirah, where he had served with the 2nd Battalion, Scottish Rifles, passed fit by a Medical Board, was on his way to join the 1st Battalion in Natal, being sent out in a Transport with mules. The fact that my three sons were on Service was some consolation for my own intense disappointment in not being sent to South Africa, where in 1881 I had suffered as a Soldier for my loyal obedience to orders.

I had a pleasant dinner on the 24th October at the American Ambassador's, sitting next to Mr. Smalley, for many years *The Times'* Commissioner in America; but what I enjoyed most was a conversation with Mr. Arthur Balfour in a room by ourselves, when, at his request, I explained to him the salient features in the work of mobilisation, for his quickness in comprehending a complicated problem made him a delightful companion.

On the 7th November Her Majesty the Queen, at 11.30 a.m., signed the authority for the Secretary of State for War to send a force out to South Africa, and to call out the Reserves. I having previously obtained the permission of the Secretary of the General Post Office to clear the lines, passed on immediately the Royal authority, which was received at 11.45 a.m., and its receipt at Districts was notified within half an hour. In most of them, all the Posters summoning Reservists were out by 2 o'clock, that is, within two hours and a quarter of the Queen's authority having been received at the War Office.

Colonel Stopford,[1] who had worked hard on Mobilisation questions for years, came into my office radiant with the news of the prompt action taken in the Districts, adding, "and now I shall go away and buy old furniture." I asked, "What is the joke?" He said, "That is what Count von Moltke did after he had telegraphed in 1870, 'Mobilise.'"

All through the Autumn and Winter of 1899–1900 the work was heavy at the office, and especially for me,[2] as the Deputy Adjutant-General was changed three times, two of them going to South Africa.

When at 2 p.m. on the 31st December we heard of the disasters south of Ladysmith, I wrote to Lord Lansdowne offering to start that evening for South Africa to serve under Sir Redvers Buller.[3] Lord Roberts was, however, appointed as Commander-in-Chief. The additional bad news kept us in office from early morn till late in the evening, and then I had to work at home till nearly midnight.

I noted in my diary that excitable Pressmen imagined that regiments had been cut off, and indeed all sorts of misfortunes besides those which our troops suffered. I was occupied a considerable part of each day in assuaging the fears of ladies, whose fathers, brothers, or lovers were at the seat of War, and spent a good deal of private money in telegrams for news as to the safety of those loved ones, for the War Office covers only expenses of telegrams for casualties.

My duties were not confined absolutely to Military matters, and I had much correspondence with my friend Lord Wantage, the President of the Red Cross Society. He wrote to me on the 10th January: "The Red Cross has

[1] Major-General the Hon. Sir F. Stopford, K.C.M.G., C.B. commanding the Home District.

[2] The pressure may be gauged by the fact that whereas in other years I had taken for hunting purposes forty-six of the sixty days' leave granted to a Staff officer, yet with the same number of horses I took twelve days only that hunting season.

[3] I had previously, on hearing Redvers Buller had gone to Natal, telegraphed and written to him my anxiety to serve under and assist him in any way I could. In reply, he wrote: "Frere Camp, 27th December 1899.—Your telegram offering to come and serve under me was a very great compliment to me, and also a temptation. . . . I was twice on the point of telegraphing from Cape Town to ask that you might come out, and then I thought it was not fair to ask you to come and undertake a job that I in my heart thought only doubtfully possible."

anticipated all your requirements mentioned in your letter, except crutches, and these shall be attended to at once."

Some of the requests made to me by importunate ladies were peculiar; one was very angry with me because the War Office would not send out an establishment for curing, or destroying painlessly, horses. Another lady said she did not want her son to go to war, because he was only twenty-one. A third wished her son, who had just joined the army, transferred to a depôt and kept in England, or allowed to exchange to a regiment at home. I explained to her that if her craven request were granted, none of his associates would speak to him. On the other hand, another lady was angry with me because I had not time to see her former footman. He was getting 28s. a week, but wanted to give up his situation and join his two brothers, who were serving under General Gatacre.

Two friends of mine, Miss Agnes Keyser and her sister, gave up their house in Grosvenor Crescent for "Sick and Wounded Officers," who might have no relatives in London. Some of the most celebrated Physicians and Surgeons volunteered to attend any patients in the Hospital gratis, and the Misses Keyser provided everything, including trained nurses, free of all expense to patients. This, however, was not in any way the limit of their generosity, for when a friend of mine, who had lost a foot in action, was leaving the Hospital, Miss Agnes Keyser asked me if he was fairly well off, to which I replied, "No, he has very small means, but is going to stay for a time with a married sister." On learning which, Miss Agnes, who superintended the Hospital, sent with him a nurse who had been attending him at her own house.

As I was the means of introducing patients in the first instance, the correspondence connected therewith occupied an appreciable portion of my time. When, many months afterwards, one of my sons was returning to England, invalided on account of appendicitis, Miss Agnes Keyser said to Sir Frederick Treves, "I want you to do an operation for appendicitis." "Yes, any day you like next week; a hundred guineas. Will you fix the day now?" She answered, "No, I cannot, for my friend's son is on the sea." "Why, is he in the army?" "Yes, he is on his way from South Africa." "Then I revoke my offer to

operate, and will do it only on my own terms." "Well, you shall have them, whatever they are." "I shall charge nothing for the operation. Your friend's son will pay only the expense in the Home where I wish him to be under nurses whom I have trained especially for the aftercure of that operation."

In 1897 I had taken up the question of Artillery, in which the British army was deficient[1] and by corresponding privately with the Commander-in-Chief in India, simultaneous efforts were made to obtain the much-required increase. Lord Lansdowne received favourably my application, which was strongly backed by the Commander-in-Chief, and the result, helped by the "War Fever," was that in 1899–1900 we created 7 Batteries of Horse and 48 Batteries of Field Artillery. Some of them were very short of officers and sergeants; indeed one Battery was raised, and commanded for several months by a Riding-master. The popularity of the war enabled us to fill them up without any difficulty as regards the Rank and File; indeed all of them were, after a few months, considerably over strength, but in many cases there was only one sergeant for 60 or 70 Gunners and Drivers.

Three years before the war, on my suggestion to the Commander-in-Chief, Colonel Owen Hay, Royal Artillery, was sent out to command at Ladysmith; and in January 1899, not forseeing the war would break out so soon, to my subsequent great regret (although his services were invaluable at home), I wrote to ask him as a favour to come home to help in this augmentation of the Artillery, and it was he who really did all the Head Quarters work of it.

Colonel Hay had no sooner got the Artillery augmentation into working order, than I turned his attention to our Depôts. When the war broke out in South Africa the administration of the Horse and Field Artillery was centralised at Woolwich, where an officer had two depôts under him. This arrangement for the Field Artillery did not work well even in Peace, and after Mobilisation the depôt became unmanageable. In March 1900, 200 Recruits joined at Woolwich every week, many sleeping on the floors in passages.

Although the army order which authorised Colonel Hay's

[1] The British army had 2½ guns for 1000 sabres and bayonets. On the Continent, armies had 4 or 5 guns for 1000 men.

change was not introduced till August 1900, he had been at work at it for months, and had decentralised the Field Artillery. I then asked the Commander-in-Chief to allow him to return to South Africa, but he was unwilling to part with him, and Hay's soldierlike resignation was a lesson to all of us.

Six months later we had some difficulty, as the Financial side of the office endeavoured, when the war took a more favourable turn, to reduce the batteries to one section each. This might have been carried out if the Commander-in-Chief had not, in strenuously supporting my objections, concurred in my view that it would be better to disband half the Batteries than have cadres of two guns only. This would have indicated such vacillation that I doubt if any War minister could have carried a reduction at the time; but the question was solved by its being made clear to the Secretary of State that the establishment of two guns per Battery would not produce the Reserve men required on Mobilisation.

I foresaw the war would last longer than many of my friends realised. In November 1899 I told an anxious mother that she must anticipate that it would be a much longer business than anyone in London thought, and she repeated this to one of my colleagues, who replied, "Yes, I know he thinks so; but I cannot imagine why he holds that opinion. In my mind, I think it will be over in a few weeks."

With mistaken views of economy, our Administration had framed Regulations that farriers, having been taught at the Public expense, should re-engage, thus leaving very few in the Reserve. It was clear for a serious war, involving the purchase of thousands of animals, there would be insufficient Shoeing-smiths, and before the first demand was made I consulted Colonel Owen Hay and Colonel C. Crutchley,[1] the Recruiting officer in the office. He was not only throughly versed in the complicated problem of the labour market, but a pleasant colleague, never losing heart in the longest hours and most difficult circumstances.

To him and to Colonel Hay I suggested there must be

[1] He came under my notice in February 1885 at Gakdul, where he arrived on a camel from Abu Klea, with an amputated leg, and I have never forgotten his cheerful demeanour, with the prospect of another 100 miles' journey to the Nile, which I endeavoured to make as little painful as possible.

plenty of young blacksmiths in villages, who, if they were promised they would not be drilled as a part of their bargain, would be willing to go to South Africa on a one year's engagement, with a bounty of £10 and the chance of getting a medal. My forecast was correct, for we sent out over 700 in 1900 and 5 per centum in the two following years to replace wastage, the two colonels taking all the arrangements off my hands.

While the Press reviled the Secretary of State and all who were working under him, officers in South Africa expressed very different opinions, and I was warmly thanked by them.[1]

I found that the hours in office,[2] often from 9.30 a.m. till 6 p.m., and two hours after dinner, told on my health, and an old trouble—neuralgia of the nerves of the stomach—warned me that I could not go on affronting nature by working without some relaxation.

On the 22nd of January Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal came into my office and said in his gentle voice, "I should like to do something for our Country, and raise some Mounted men in Canada and send them to South Africa." I asked, "Do you know that our men are serving for about 1s. 6d. a day, and you would not get Canadians to go for that?" "Oh," he said, "there will be no difficulty about that. I shall make up any deficiency. What I want you to do is to write down everything that is necessary in the way of organisation." "One Squadron, two, or what?" "Anything you like." So I told him a Regiment of three Squadrons was the most suitable organisation, if money was no object. He replied, "No, no object. I should like to do the thing well, and I want the Mother country to pay them only what she is paying her own soldiers." It did not take me long, with Colonel Robb's[3] assistance, to sketch out the establishment required, and our only

[1] Letter from Major-General Sir George Marshall, K.C.B., general officer commanding the Artillery:—

"I thank you very sincerely for all the assistance you have given us in so promptly supplying all our heavy demands in the Artillery, in men and horses, since we came out. I can assure you that the feeling of Gunners is one of amazement and admiration at such a large force of Field Artillery being sent out so efficiently and promptly. We owe you much for all you did to make us Shoot, and improving our Tactical efficiency, and now when we succeed we give you the praise and gratitude."

[2] I put in 64 hours a week in office, besides what I did at home, making up the time after an occasional day's hunting, by working till after midnight.

[3] Now Brigadier-General.

point of difference was that Strathcona insisted, in his quiet way, on having a great number of clergy. Himself a Protestant, he desired to keep on good terms with the Catholic clergy, amongst whom he had many friends; and the number of clergy accompanying the Regiment was certainly redundant, in our point of view. Lord Strathcona paid nearly £500,000 for our Country.

On the 27th of the month I had a heavy fall when riding an impetuous horse with hounds.[1] We found at Skreen's Park, near Chelmsford; and being in pain from neuralgia of the stomach I was irritated by the animal's impatience, and let him go his own pace at the first fence. The horse over-jumping, hit his knee, and the next thing I remember was being crushed to the ground. Miss Jones,[2] who saw me fall, accompanied me back two or three miles, and borrowed a pony-chaise from a friendly farmer, by which I was conveyed to Ongar station. I arrived in London in considerable pain, but without being seriously injured; indeed, I attended office for a full day on the 29th. The horse had pressed me so deeply into the ground that a gold crucifix and locket of Lady Wood's, suspended from my neck, were driven so deeply into the ribs that the impression was plainly discernible fifteen months later. Two years later I consulted my friend, Dr. Moore, for a peculiar mark on the left temple, saying, "I have got a spot there

[1] I had ridden the horse for a year or so, my friend Colonel Tollner, who is the best judge I ever met, having purchased it for me at £30 out of the Woolwich Drag Hunt, where it had been ridden by a succession of Subalterns who desired to qualify for Horse Artillery. Hounds no sooner broke covert than the little horse, for he was small, invariably tried to travel faster than I wanted. In a run of thirty-five minutes he got away with me after every fence, until exhausted I left hounds, and I never controlled him until I covered bit and snaffle with gutta-percha, on which he would not close his teeth. The horse had never before given me a fall, although he had occasionally been very nearly down, for being unusually sagacious with all his high courage, he generally contrived to land on his feet. On one occasion, led by the ex-master of the Essex hounds, Mr. Loftus Arkwright, we were galloping to the west of Parndon Wood, near Harlow, and approached a gate which was locked and chained. My companions went a hundred yards down, and then pressed slowly through a hedge with high growers. This was impossible for me, without grave risk to my eyes, and so riding the horse up to the gate, I put his head over it, that he might see that the field bridge beyond was broken down, and covered over with faggots, and then taking him back fifty yards I let him go. The horse's usual habit at timber was to rise straight up in the air, but he was so clever that on this occasion, "spreading himself," he cleared the broken bridge by two feet.

[2] The best lady "on any horse" to hounds in the Essex Hunt.

which is growing larger. I must say it is fainter in colour every week." He replied, "You remember the horse crushed your face into the ground. It broke a vessel, the blood from which is now slowly dispersing."

I had a mass of private correspondence from South Africa, for not only had I my three sons there, but many officers who had served under me at Aldershot wrote to me in terms of indignation at the strictures passed by civilian writers on the Aldershot training. One officer, who criticised severely certain branches of the army, wrote in such sympathetic terms of the Infantry, to which he did not belong, that I reproduce his letter below.[1]

I got some ponies sent to Malta—enough to train men in every unit—and asked the Secretary of State to request India to train a Company in every Battalion at our expense. I urged also that a Company in every Battalion should be trained at all stations at Home and Abroad to act as Mounted Infantry.

[1] "What a magnificent production is the British Infantry soldier. I thought as he went by, tattered and torn, black and greasy, bearded and filthy, on the squares of Johannesburg and Pretoria, how much the British nation owes to him and the officers who made him. I shall never forget the scene at these two places for the remainder of my lifetime; it was worth all the hardships of this war to have been privileged to be present."

CHAPTER XLIX

ADJUTANT-GENERAL—*Continued*

Misunderstanding of Military matters—Forecast of change of Staff by a Charwoman—Antiquated Military Exercises abandoned—A change in Inspections at Sandhurst—Funeral of Her Majesty Queen Victoria—Offer to go to South Africa—Accepted, but not carried out—Lord Roberts approves certain reforms initiated by me—I leave Pall Mall, after eight years' work.

ALL through the war I was asked by my friends, "Why ever did you send out so-and-so; see how badly he is doing?" And again, "Why did you not make better plans?" The ignorance of the Public is the more comprehensible when we consider that in February the Under-Secretary of State stated, in the House of Commons, that the Divisional and Brigade Commanders were appointed on the recommendation of the Army Board. He had been misinformed, and his informant, on my remonstrance, admitted the error. I was never able, however, to tell my friends the truth, until asked to give evidence before Lord Elgin's Royal Commission of Inquiry into the War. I then stated, in reply to questions, the facts. The Order in Council under which the War Office was administered at the time, had placed the Heads of the great Departments in a position of quasi-independence of the Commander-in-Chief, by allowing them the privilege of dealing directly with the Secretary of State for War, at his option. The Commander-in-Chief, however, ordered me to address him on any matters which I desired to place before the Secretary of State, and therefore, although Lord Lansdowne minuted papers to me, he received them back through Lord Wolseley; I therefore had no independent position. In regard to plans, as Adjutant-General I never knew of one plan of Military operations. The expression frequently used by the Secretary

of State in the House, "My Military Advisers," implied only the Commander-in-Chief and the Director-General of Military Intelligence.

Throughout the year I was asking for an increase in the Establishment of officers, showing we had in one case, one officer to pay 850 men, of whom half were at Hounslow and half at Aldershot. I was urging that the Establishments of Rank and File were insufficient to enable us to train our soldiers, for when we had taken out the best educated and most intelligent men in each company for Mounted Infantry, as signallers, for Regimental Transport, and servants, there were few left capable of acting as section or group leaders; there were too few officers and too few men.

In one of the papers I submitted to the Secretary of State I wrote: "I am certain that all officers who have been fighting in South Africa will agree that the want of training has been the direct cause of many of our heavy losses, and of some of our reverses." I explained that the Rank and File were as untrained as they were brave, and this from no fault of their own or of their officers, but because the British soldier was never given sufficient opportunity of practising his profession in the United Kingdom. I was engaged in another long correspondence with Cavalry Colonels, endeavouring to reduce the obligatory expenses of officers.

Lord Lansdowne went to the Foreign Office in November. I had worked under his direction for five years, and regarding him with genuine affection, shall always gratefully remember his sympathy in my disappointment in not being allowed to proceed to South Africa. If it were not so sad, the animadversion of the Press on his want of vigour as War Minister would have been comical. He added ten Line Battalions, one of Irish Guards, and 330 field guns to the Army.

When it was foreseen that Lord Lansdowne would leave the War Office there were many speculations as to his successor, and we were under the impression that Mr. George Wyndham was on the point of being nominated, before it was decided to send him to Ireland; and I got him to agree in anticipation to support my proposition that any pensioned private soldiers of good character should receive an increase at the age of sixty-five to make up a living income.

In the office it was universally believed that when Lord Wolseley's Command terminated, some of the Senior officers who had shared his many years of work in trying to render the Army fit for War would be removed, and this feeling was amusingly indicated by the conversation of two women who, when scrubbing the floors of the War Office, were overheard talking by General Laye, the Deputy Adjutant-General, as he went into his room one busy morning at nine o'clock. During the War a Restaurant had been started in the basement of the building, and I, finding the smell intolerable, had a glass air-shaft carried from the basement above the level of the Adjutant-General's room. One woman, looking up from her scrubbing and pointing to the carpenter's poles, asked, "Sally, what 'as they put up that ere scaffolding for?" The other replied, "Don't yer know? That's where the new lot's going to 'ang the old lot."

When it became evident that the class of Yeomanry who for patriotic reasons, went to South Africa at Army rates of pay was exhausted, the Secretary of State enlisted men at five shillings, many of whom, in the opinion of the General Officer Commanding at Aldershot, were no better in education or class than the average Cavalry recruit.

The General Commanding in South Africa telegraphed for more Mounted Infantry, and I then suggested that, the Boers having no longer any Artillery, it would be simpler to train our Artillery in South Africa to shoot with a rifle. I was not certain how the Gunners would like the idea, but the sense of duty is very high in the Corps, and the result was very satisfactory.

In the Autumn I addressed the Commander-in-Chief, pointing out that our drill-book contained many obsolete movements, and asking leave to curtail as useless for war our Manual Exercise, containing in slow time nearly fifty motions, which most of our Generals and many of our Commanding officers still cherished, as their predecessors had, since it was instituted in 1780. I stated the Chinese was the only other nation which had any exercise like it; that Germany and Austria were content with teaching the men three motions; and also that we continued to practise the bayonet exercise, all of which was more suitable for a Music Hall than for training

men to fight. The Commander-in-Chief approved, and on the 1st December an order was issued forbidding the Manual and Bayonet exercises being performed at Inspections or at any other time, as Regimental or Battalion parade practices. The order was actually signed by myself as Adjutant-General, although it was issued on the day I became acting Commander-in-Chief, for Lord Wolseley gave up his office on the last day of November.

In my one month of command I was able to carry out one reform. It became part of my duty to inspect the academies at Woolwich and Sandhurst. At the former I endeavoured, with only slight success, to render the inspection more practical, but at Sandhurst the reform was drastic. For eighty years, since the College was established, the young officers had been inspected in marching past, and in performing the Manual and Bayonet exercises as a preparation for war. When I ordered an inspection of the cadets in a practical Outpost scheme, one officer Instructor intimated privately his intention of resigning, as he considered my demands on him were outside his duty. I sent back a message that his resignation would be accepted; heard nothing more of it, and saw an attack on a line of Outposts, for which I had set the scheme, very well carried out.

At the end of 1900 and the beginning of the new year, I was occupied in preparing papers for a Committee of Inquiry into the War Office system, of which Mr. Clinton Dawkins was Chairman. I advocated strongly before the Committee the transfer to General officers commanding Districts, the greater part of the Administrative and Financial part of the business then transacted at the War Office, in two carefully prepared memoranda, and supplemented my arguments by giving evidence at length before the Committee.

I was much impressed by Mr. Clinton Dawkins' quick apprehension of points in administration; but his manner was so quiet that, as I told him months later, when he asked me what I thought of his report, "Oh, I am delighted; but I was astonished when it came out, for I thought when I left your committee room that I had failed to make much impression on you, and you have practically endorsed nearly all my suggestions."

Lord Roberts returned to London on the 3rd of January,

when my brief command of the Army ceased. He took up at once the question of officers, by Lord Wolseley's directions, wearing uniform [1] at the War Office, on which an order I had drafted two years previously was and is still in print, but it has not yet been issued.

In the evening of the 22nd January Her Imperial Majesty the Queen died, and besides my personal grief, I realised I had lost a Patroness who since the Zulu war had treated me with the most gracious kindness.

The hours in the office for the next week were longer than ever, much unnecessary work being occasioned by different departments overlapping in their desire to have everything according to the King's Commands.

On the 2nd February, the day of the funeral, the morning was bitterly cold, and the Commander-in Chief, being doubtless anxious, left his hotel ten minutes before the Head Quarters Staff were ordered to be present to accompany him. There was then a wait of over an hour and a half at Victoria Station, and when at last the procession moved, on a wave of the Chief's

[1] On the following 2nd May I received an order that all officers attending the Royal Academy dinner were to appear in full dress uniform, so I duly passed it on to a General who I knew had received an invitation. Late in the afternoon I received a telegram cancelling the orders which had been issued to me, not only by the Adjutant-General but by the private secretary of the Commander-in-Chief. I was unable to communicate with my General, who was the only person in uniform, but was much less annoyed than most of us would have been, while I was amused at the excitement of a court official who highly disapproved of officers appearing as such at this function.

The dinner was to me very pleasant, as I sat between the Dean of Westminster and Mr. Ouless, the Royal Academician, who were both delightful companions. Mr. Ouless capped my story of the corporal recognising me as an officer by my bad language when I was lying wounded under the Redan in 1855, by telling us one of an artist, celebrated as etcher and author, who was walking one winter's day on Hampstead Heath, and passing near one of the ponds, which was frozen over, he saw a crowd collected round it watching a small dog, which having ventured on the ice, had fallen through into the water. The ice was just so strong it could not get out, and yet would not support its weight. The excited owner was shouting, "Half a crown for anyone who will save my dog." The artist plunged in, and having rescued the animal put it down on the edge of the pond and started running at top speed towards his house at Highgate. He heard a panting man behind him, but fearing rheumatism ran on to change his clothes, till the man caught him up, shouting, "Hi, hi," and as he reached him called out, "Here's your money." Mr. Ouless' friend being very cold and cross said, "Damn you! Damn your dog; damn your half-crown." The man touched his cap and said, "Beg your pardon, sir. I didn't know you was a gentleman."

baton, it was difficult to start immediately the head of the column, which was already to the north of Buckingham Palace. When we moved, it was nearly impossible to make the cream-coloured horses walk at the pace of Infantry marching "in Slow time," and I apprehend the Procession could not have satisfied His Majesty the King.

When the team, being hooked in to the made-up gun carriage, moved from Windsor Station the bands, which were immediately under the overhead passage then recently erected, clashed with such a reverberating noise that some of the horses threw themselves into the collar violently, and the carriage rocked ominously. Fortunately the off wheeler broke the swingletree, and as there was no other at hand the sailors drew the coffin up to St. George's Chapel,—perhaps a more appropriate manner of haulage than horses for a Naval monarch.

Some people assumed it was the fault of the Adjutant-General that there was no spare swingletree as there is on every gun service carriage, but I had no difficulty in producing correspondence showing that I had been instructed from Windsor Castle that the War Office need not interfere in the matter of the made-up gun carriage, which was to be supplied by the Carriage factory at Woolwich on requisition by the Lord Chamberlain.

On the 1st February the Military Secretary came into my office and asked if I was willing to go to South Africa and serve under Lord Kitchener. I took two hours for consideration, and then assented, mentioning verbally, I thought that for Service there was no question of dignity involved, although Kitchener was a Lieutenant when I had been some years a Major-General.[1]

[1] Copy of letter to the Military Secretary:—

"*1st February* 1901.

"My Dear Grove,—I have thought over your query, 'If Lord Roberts invited you, would you go out to South Africa and serve under Lord Kitchener?' I do not think the fact that Kitchener joined me in 1883 as a Lieutenant, when I was raising the Egyptian Army, should influence my decision. If it is thought I can serve our Country by going out, I will willingly go, and serve under Kitchener on the following assumptions: (*a*) If I am not killed, I come back here if I so desire, and that my South Africa time is not deducted. This was done in Lord Wolseley's case. (*b*) That if Lord Kitchener becomes a casualty, no one junior to me shall come out to supersede me."

On the 7th February I was informed it had been settled I was not to go to South Africa, and although I was not allowed officially to see the telegram on which the decision was based, it came into my hands, and was to the effect (telegram from Lord Kitchener), "While he would be delighted to serve under Sir Evelyn Wood, if he were sent out, he felt he ought not to have him under his command." I could not thank him at the time, but did so eight months later.[1]

All through January we were discussing the organisation of Ammunition columns, and to my regret I failed to make my Superiors realise that such could not be formed, unless the officers were available. I was asked, "But surely you can get them somewhere?" So far as I know, the matter is "still under consideration."

In the second week in February His Majesty intimated his intention of presenting medals to a Colonial Corps which was about to arrive in the Thames. The matter was not definitely settled, so I was unable to let the Commanding officer know the reason why I sent him a written request couched in polite terms for a nominal roll of all Ranks: I received back for answer a verbal message, "he had no time for such Red-tape nonsense." Eventually, however, I obtained the names from a courteous subordinate, and by keeping Colonel Crutchley and non-commissioned officers of the Guards sorting up to a late hour, the medals wanted for the parade next day were arranged by Squadrons on trays. When the decorated men had passed, there were a dozen or so who were indignant at not receiving medals, but I elicited from them that they had been on sick leave in England, and only joined the Corps as it marched into the garden of Buckingham Palace!

[1] Copy of letter to Lord Kitchener:—

"1*st October* 1901.

"My dear Kitchener,—As I am now out of office, I can unburden my mind on the subject on which I have long desired to write to you, but I did not feel justified in doing so when I was Adjutant-General. I saw a very generous telegram from you relative to the proposition that I should go to South Africa to serve under your orders. I do not suppose you would ever have thought I was doing anything to try and inconvenience you in any way, but I should like you to know from me that the suggestion that I should go out did not emanate from me in any way, as will be seen by the answer which I gave to Sir Coleridge Grove when the proposition was made. Please regard this as confidential between you and—Yours very sincerely,

"(Signed) Evelyn Wood."

On the 22nd March the Secretary of State informed me that it had been decided to reduce the status of the Adjutant-General, and asked for my views. I had worked for many years with Mr. Brodrick, and being on terms of personal friendship I offered to resign at once, if it would render his position less troublesome. This offer he declined to accept, and eventually it was settled I should go to Salisbury when the Army Corps system, which had been explained in his speech in the House of Commons on the 9th March, was brought into operation. He stated that his object was to centralise responsibility in the districts, but decentralise administration, and he fulfilled his object eventually to a great extent.

On the 15th May the Commander-in-Chief motored round a part of Essex from the Thames to Epping, in order to study the tactical features of the country. As we passed three miles to the east of Ongar I stopped the car at Stondon Place, in order that Lord Roberts might leave a card on my young friend Maurice White,[1] Rifle Brigade, who after showing marked courage, and being slightly wounded on the 22nd December 1900, was shot through the spine four days later. He chanced to be at the gate in an invalid carriage wheeled by his elder brother, one of the hardest riders in the Essex Hunt, as we passed, and I presented the wounded lad to his Lordship, who spoke very kindly to him.

I had arranged with Lord Roberts, who was dining with the Speaker, that he should go up by train from Epping; but when he saw I meant to drive through the Forest for pleasure, he elected to accompany me. Between Woodford and Walthamstow we passed a light grocer's van; the man was not driving carefully, and after we had passed, the noise of the motor frightened the horse, which, swerving, collided with a lamp-post. The shafts parted, the horse broke away, and the man was pitched into the road, where he lay insensible, till running back I picked him up. While Lord Roberts with General Nicholson proceeded to London, I put the man, whose thigh was broken, into the car, and drove to a Hospital about a mile off. The Matron and nurses were sympathetic and anxious to help, but they assured me that every bed was occupied. A Committee of doctors was sitting at the time, and one of them coming out

[1] Three times mentioned in Despatches.

to see who was talking, I offering money, used Lord Roberts' name; but all in vain, the Doctor saying, "It is not a question of money; our sole objection is that there is absolutely no spare bed." Handing him my card, I asked where I could take the man, on which he said, "You are Essex, I see; we must try and do something for you. If you will have the man lifted out, I will clear a bed." This he did by taking one of the patients who could best bear moving up to a nurse's room, and putting the injured man in his place.

I was now seeing more of the Commander-in-Chief daily, for we had been strangers until he took over Command. Travelling about with him we interchanged ideas, and I realised the charm of the personality which has so agreeably affected most of those with whom he has worked in his long career. On the 21st May he wrote to the Secretary of State that he had intended to take up the revision of Confidential Reports on assuming Command, but found it had already been done.[1]

I accompanied him to the Aldershot Central Gymnasium in July, and he was so impressed with the training that he wrote to me next day urging we should do all in our power to develop the individual intelligence of the men, and no longer train them like machines. I had the satisfaction of informing him we had taken up the matter in October 1900, and what he saw at Aldershot was being carried out at every Infantry Depot, and that the Commanding officers were all in favour of the new system.

In July the Commander-in-Chief, impressed by the difficulty of training officers with small companies, considered whether it would not be better to have four companies instead of eight in a battalion. I was able at once to give him the history of the proposals which had been made during the last forty years. I did not mention, as was the case, that General Blumenthal, when he attended our Manœuvres in 1872, told a friend of mine that he envied us our small companies, and that the large companies in Germany were due only to the impossibility of finding adequate numbers of gentlemen to

[1] "It has been most carefully threshed out by the A.G. The proposed Reports seem to me to be all that can be desired, and I recommend their immediate adoption."

officer the Army. I pointed out that most of the advantages were obtainable from two companies being worked together for five months in the spring and summer. This arrangement has, moreover, the advantage of enabling Commanding officers to so associate them that the most capable officers are responsible for the two companies. Lord Roberts wrote to me next day: "Your note on four versus eight companies is unanswerable; I shall not move in the matter."

Somewhat later he was not able to agree with me at first in my views about Volunteer Field Artillery. He had seen the excellent work done by high-class mechanics sent out by the Vickers Company, and wished to create batteries of Volunteers. I had frequently put on paper that it was impracticable for Volunteers to give sufficient time to become efficient Field Artillery men, but the Secretary of State formed a Committee composed of the Financial Secretary, a Militia officer, and a civilian, to report on the subject, and they soon came to the same conclusion as I had done. Indeed, it is obvious, as we have the greatest difficulty in getting a limited number of Volunteers to go into camp for a fortnight, and as three months initial, with a month annual, training is essential for Artillery, the proposition is not feasible.

Before I left the Office I got a grant from the Treasury, the mere idea of which was received with ridicule when I first mentioned it in the War Office. I pointed out that the Staff College graduates in 1899–1900 had fed the Drag Hounds and paid the wages of the kennel huntsman, although on duty in South Africa, the period for which they would have remained at the College had the war not arisen. When the Establishment was closed, no more funds were available, and so at the conclusion of the War, or when it was in sight, and we were arranging to re-open the College, there were no Drag Hounds. Now the most gifted Staff officer is useless in the Field unless he is at home in the saddle, and there are many who go to the College who have never had an opportunity of riding across country and over fences until they follow the Drag Hounds. I put this clearly, and to the astonishment of the Secretary of State the £200 was granted, and handed over to an officer who was rejoining on the Tutorial staff. I had met him when I was looking at some tactical operations near Tidworth, and heard

the story, which interested me much, as I knew the educational value of the Drag Hounds.

In July I heard the name of my successor, and I then asked if I might be told officially that I was to leave the War Office at the end of September, and eventually got a month's notice.

I was the more anxious to make certain because I had received a tempting offer from the Chairman and Directors of a property in South America to go over, and make a report on it, receiving an honorarium of £1000, and all expenses for myself and a secretary. I informed the Commander-in-Chief and the Secretary of State of the offer, bearing in mind the apprehensions of the War Office in 1880, who had deprived me of all pay, even half-pay of 11s. per diem, for the six months I was in South Africa with Her Imperial Majesty the Empress Eugénie. Anxious to avoid the Secretary of State being inconvenienced by any questions in Parliament, I suggested I should go on half-pay for two months, and take up my new work on the 1st January. Neither of my Superiors raised any objection, but on reflection I thought that any delay in initiating the working of the Army Corps Districts might weaken the arguments of the Secretary of State, in favour of what I still regard as being a sound system, so I reluctantly abandoned the idea, going straight from Pall Mall to Salisbury.

On the 3rd September my comrades in the Adjutant-General branch, both Civil and Military, gave me a Farewell Dinner, which induced a touching outburst of regret from those who knew how I had tried to do my duty during the War.

The Commander-in-Chief, who was away from London, wrote in kind terms thanking me for the help I had afforded him during the nine months of our association. He dwelt especially on the use I had been to him from my knowledge of War Office details, and intimate acquaintance with the various localities to which I had accompanied him on his tours of Inspection.

CHAPTER L

1901–2–3—SECOND ARMY CORPS DISTRICT

Salisbury Plain—A cycle ride in the dark—Plan of Tidworth Barracks—Colonel Grierson—his forecast of Russo-Japanese War—An enthusiastic Horse Artillery man—The Blackmore Vale—Netley Hospital—Faulty Administration—A prolific Dame—Yeomanry characteristics—Tipnor Magazine—Bulford Camp—Stables, new plan—Shooting 180 years ago—The Chaplain-General—Surgeon-General Evatt—Improvement in visual efficiency—The choice of an Aide-de-Camp—The King's gracious letter.

ON the 1st October I went to stay with friends at Andover, accompanied by my second son, Captain C. M. Wood, Northumberland Fusiliers, who had just returned from South America, where he had gone, intending to leave the Army, but after personal experience declined a well-paid business engagement. He was better educated than are most Army officers, having on leaving school studied with Messrs. Wren & Gurney for the India Civil Service. When about to present himself for Examination, the entrance age limit was raised from seventeen to nineteen, dating from April 1st, and his birthday being on the 2nd April, the change would have obliged him to wait from seventeen till he was twenty years of age. I hesitated as to the expense involved, and he was unwilling to wait, so on a few days' notice he passed into Sandhurst. His experience in Egypt, China, and in South Africa as Adjutant during the war had been valuable, and I offered him the post of Assistant Military Secretary, or Aide-de-Camp, warning him that he must not expect in the better paid post to hunt as often as I did, and he decided that hunting with me was better than the extra emoluments. This suited my convenience, for he not only hired houses and stabling, but managed all my disbursements,

leaving me free to devote my time to my profession, and to as much amusement as I chose to take.

He and I cycled on the 1st October from Andover to Tidworth, then in the hands of contractors. I had previously pointed out to the Secretary of State the great delay which had occurred in commencing to build the barracks, because no precaution had been taken to arrange with the Midland Railway Company how much the contractor should pay for the use of the short line from Ludgershall to Tidworth over the line which was made for Government by and was still in the hands of the Midland Railway. This I got arranged, and on the 1st October the contractor's son had begun, having about a thousand men at work.

The sites for the barracks had been approved by officers in the War Office who evidently had not been to the spot with the plans in hands, for a Barracks to be called "Assaye" looked close into a hill, and all the Commanding officers' quarters had been thrown so far forward in front of the barracks that they could not have walked to Mess, and as their stables adjoined the quarters, the grooms would have had a distance varying from 800 to 1100 yards intervening between their rooms and the horses. I could not alter the position of the barracks, but I moved the Commanding officers' quarters back, and personally never approved of any site which I did not see on the ground.

I found the question of the Tidworth barracks so interesting that we stayed late, and were benighted while we had still 7 miles to cycle to Penton Lodge, where we were staying with Mr. and Lady Susan Sutton. I was in front, followed at some distance by my son, the wheel of whose cycle catching a big stone turned him over, the somersault being so complete that a box of matches fell out of his waistcoat pocket. Walkinshaw, who was a few hundred yards behind, must have passed close to him, but in the darkness, the lamp having been broken, was unaware of what had occurred, and I was just starting back, after reaching Penton Lodge, to look for my son, when he appeared, cut about the face, but not seriously hurt.

Mr. Sutton mounted us at four o'clock next morning for cub-hunting, and after another visit to Tidworth I started on a round of inspection of my extensive District. I knew Dover,

Portland, and Milford Haven, and had been stationed as a sailor at Portsmouth and Plymouth, so had some knowledge of the 2nd Army Corps District.

As it was necessary to hire a house in Salisbury as an office, I was obliged to request the Generals to carry on as before for a short time. My son acted as my Staff officer, besides taking charge of my domestic concerns, until Colonel Grierson[1] joined me at the end of October. I had had the pleasure of meeting him before, and renewed his acquaintance late one evening, when I found him sitting on an empty packing case of stationery in a fireless, carpetless room, lighted by a guttering candle fixed in a mound of grease on the mantelpiece. I named him Mark Tapley, for on that occasion, as in other trying circumstances, he showed the utmost good-humour, and talked as if he were sitting in a well-furnished office.

In the two years we worked together I cannot recall we ever had a difference of opinion, and I found his knowledge of Continental Armies of great assistance in organising the Army Corps.

Six months before the Russo-Japanese War broke out, Grierson, who knew both Armies, said to me in reply to a question, "Yes, sir, the Japanese will win all along the line. Why? Because, they are just as brave, are better instructed and equipped, and on the battlefield will be more numerous than the Russians."

When we got to work I found it was difficult to extract from the War Office any delegation of authority in spite of the earnest wishes of the Secretary of State. As an instance in point, I mention the case of a sergeant of the Army, serving with a Yeomanry Regiment, whose Colonel thinking badly of him, asked that he might be remanded to his Regiment. This I recommended, pointing out that although it might be necessary if his Regiment had been out of the District that I should refer the point to the War Office, yet as both the Cavalry and Yeomanry regiments were in my Command, I submitted it was a matter for my decision. This view was not accepted at the time, although it was later on approved, after indeed much correspondence. Lord Roberts, to whom I appealed, saw matters as I did, but it was many months before

[1] Now Major-General J. Grierson, C.B., C.M.G.

the schedule of questions which I suggested should be dealt with locally, was approved.

I asked the Secretary of State and the Commander-in-Chief to cut me off from the War Office for three months, except in important financial matters, suggesting that if I had done anything seriously wrong at the end of that time I should be removed. My intimacy with Mr. St. John Brodrick helped me considerably, as did his repeated desire that I was to endeavour to obtain "real Service efficiency as cheaply as possible."

I was interested when making a surprise inspection of Taunton Barracks to find a sergeant proceeding to the post-office, about 400 yards from the Barracks. I had imagined that the reforms I introduced at Aldershot in 1889–90 had spread, but was mistaken, as indeed I was in believing I had done away with Sunday cleaning-up work, for when I visited some Artillery stables after I had been more than a year in command of the Army Corps, one Sunday morning, I found a general sweep-up being carried out, and stopped it peremptorily.

When I went to Aldershot in 1867, Sunday was a show day in stables, which gave rise to a Horse Artillery man's curious request. A young soldier going up to his Commanding officer, said, "Please, sir, I want to change my religion." "What's up? What do you want to be?" "I want to be a Roman Catholic." "Priest been at you?" "No, sir; no priest." "Woman?" "No, sir." "Well, I shall not allow you to change your religion." "Please, sir, any man may be any religion he likes in the Army." "Yes, but I have got you noted as being a Church of England man, and I don't mean to allow you to change without giving me some reason." The man then admitted his real object. "Well, you see, sir, a Roman Catholic always goes to church at eight o'clock, and I think if I was a Roman, it would give me a better chance with my 'arness."

The feeling of pride in the Horse Artillery is great. Grierson had a very good servant whom he wished to get put on the Married roll. Going up to London, having a friend in the Office, he got the servant put on the Married roll in Field Artillery, there being no vacancy in the Horse, and on coming back, told the man, thinking he would be pleased, but received

for answer, "I am much obliged to you, sir, but I beg leave to decline, as once 'orse Artillery always 'orse Artillery. I won't go into Field, even to be put on the Married roll."

The day after I arrived at Salisbury, doing inspections without any Staff officer, I sent my son to Sherborne, where he hired for me a lodging and stabling, which I used in the winter throughout my three years' Command. The north part of the Blackmoor Vale Hunt country is as near perfection as possible, and a more pleasant set of hunting gentlemen it would be impossible to imagine. Mr John Hargreaves, a son of an equally enthusiastic Master of Fox Hounds, whom I had known in my first days at Aldershot, "carried the horn" himself, and the first season I hunted with him, 1901–2, accounted for a hundred brace of foxes.

The first time I was stopped by frost, I went on from Sherborne to Falmouth, and thence to the Scilly Islands. We were caught in a gale, and the Admiralty yacht, which by the Admiral's kindness had been placed at my disposal, made bad weather, so after enjoying for a day or two the hospitality of Mr. Dorrien-Smith, whose brother, Smith-Dorrien, had served with me in the Egyptian Army, I came back by the passenger steamer to Penzance, and as the frost still held, went from Exeter to examine a Rifle range about which the Inspector-General of Fortifications had disagreed with the General officer commanding the Western District. When we left the train at Lydford, Dartmoor was coated with ice, and the horses had great difficulty in keeping their feet. Grierson, however, extolled cheerfully and continuously the merits of the fine fresh air on the moor, his circulation being, I imagine, much better than is mine.

Just before Christmas I made a Surprise Inspection of Netley Hospital, and saw much of which I could not approve. A battalion at Portsmouth furnished a half company of 53 young soldiers all under a year's service, and these men had only done two hours' drill during the last three months, being employed in every sort of menial work. At least twice a week, six of them were supposed to be weeding gardens. If they did anything at all, they must have made them as bare as the General at Aldershot did the Long Valley, which he found covered with heather in 1855.

The misuse of soldiers had in this instance one good effect, for it helped me to abolish the appointment of Commandant just then vacant, and to let the Doctors manage their Hospital. There were many objections raised to the company being taken away: the Government lighter which brought stores from Woolwich would be kept waiting for men to unload it; there would be no guard to take charge of the Army Medical Corps men if they got drunk; there would be no one to keep the patients who were allowed to go outdoors from straying into the adjoining villages, and there would be no one to keep civilians out of the Hospital grounds. It took me many months, but eventually I was allowed to hire two civilian policemen, who with a few military police did everything that was required, the Army Medical Corps being told that if some of their men got drunk, others would have to go on guard; while the window-cleaning and coal-carrying was done by taking on a few discharged old soldiers. The Infantry can never be adequately instructed for Service until the Army Council and Generals realise that Service efficiency must be put before local administration.

It was fortunate that I was at the Railway station when a party of invalids, discharged from Hospital, and out of the Service, were being sent off, some of them to travel as far as Edinburgh. They were without greatcoats or rugs of any description, the thermometer being at 30°. This was in accordance with existing Regulations. I sent them back, and had coats issued at once, Mr Brodrick supporting my unauthorised action.

In February some Militia occupied the Bulford hutments. A battalion of the Lincoln were fairly grown men, but there was another alongside of it the sight of which indicated we had come to the end of those who enlist voluntarily even in a war. I asked one lad, who was about fourteen, his age, and he said seventeen, which was obviously inaccurate.

I now lost the assistance of General Grierson for some months, as he was called to London to work in the office of the Quartermaster-General; but he came down at his own expense every Saturday afternoon, thus keeping in touch with the work by reading up on Sunday what had been done during the week. My friend Colonel S. Lomax, who was Adjutant of the

90th Light Infantry with me in 1878 in South Africa, joined as Staff officer, and although he had not been on the Staff, yet being a thoroughly good Regimental officer, was useful. He had been at the Staff College, so soon acquired the necessary knowledge of Staff duties.

I had lived in a house belonging to Lord Pembroke on first going to Salisbury for six months, but on the return of the tenant was persuaded by my son to go into another, called "The Island." It was surrounded by streams, which after rain came up flush with the surface of the ground. There was obviously no possibility of a cellar, but my son was quite correct in asserting the house would be dry, for there was not a damp room in it, and it stood in a charming old-world garden.

There were thirteen Yeomanry regiments in the Command, all of which I saw yearly. They varied in efficiency, but all Commanding officers had loyally accepted the new idea that the Yeomanry should use their horses as a means of locomotion, dismounting to fight.

As a general rule, if an imaginary north and south line is drawn on a map through Bath, the men of the Regiments to the west of it were generally farmers or their sons, riding their own horses. The amount allowed, £3, for the hire of a horse in the west gave ample margin, while in the east of my District there was considerable difficulty in obtaining the horses, which mostly came from Livery stable-keepers in London, or on the south coast of England.

I always inspected Yeomanry in practical work, and in the first two years I looked at every man individually, finding there was much room for improvement in the saddlery, and the way in which it was fitted. Some of my readers will think this is scarcely the duty of a General, but I did it with an object, for my inspection induced closer attention by the Squadron commanders, who had evidently in some cases inspected in a perfunctory manner in previous years.

The Regiments nearly all trained about the same time, and as the Commanding officers naturally wished to have a week or ten days' work before the inspection, I had to use two sets of horses and servants, and to travel day and night to get from Welshpool or Tenby, to say Lewes, and Shorncliffe. In my second year of Command I induced two or more Regiments

to train together, and encamped with them a battery of Artillery.

I received many offers of hospitality, but was too much hurried to avail myself of them as a rule, but I spent a delightful twenty-four hours at Badminton, where there is a stately avenue, three miles long, which runs up to the house through the park, nearly ten miles in circumference.

The men of the Glamorganshire raised during the War were mainly clerks and mechanics. The Colonel, Wyndham Quinn, a good officer with a progressive mind, had taught his town-bred recruits a great deal in a limited time. The County had behaved liberally in equipping the Corps, and I found the men encamped in Margam Park, which was generously placed at their disposal by the owner, Miss Talbot. Immediately opposite to her dining-room windows there is a steep hill, for the oaks on which it is said the Admiralty, shortly before the invention of iron hulls for ships, offered her father £100,000, which he declined.

The most remarkable of the Yeomanry Regiments in the 2nd Army Corps was the North Devon. It was commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Viscount Ebrington, who if he had not been a Peer of the Realm might have been a successful man of business, for all his arrangements indicated a mastery of finance. I stayed with him one or two days on Exmoor, twelve miles north of South Molton, where he had converted a disused public-house into a fairly comfortable abode. The table arrangements were remarkable in that the whole of our dinner came off the estate on the moor. The soup made from mutton bred on the estate; the fish—trout—from a stream immediately above the house; while the joint, poultry, and indeed everything except the sweet, was produced within a few hundred yards of where we were sitting.

Next morning, when we left my entertainer, he guided me for a dozen miles over the moor to a cross track, where we were met by the huntsman of the Devon and Somerset Stag Hounds, who piloted us another ten miles, until he put us on to a bridle path leading into Minehead, where the West Somerset were awaiting my inspection. The North Devon is the only Regiment I know in which, among the officers, were to be found eleven Masters, or ex-Masters of hounds.

The Montgomeryshire Yeomanry were quite different in appearance from any others in the Command. Many understood little, and spoke no English. They performed tactical operations, however, with intuitive skill. The officers were unusually efficient, and nearly all the men were small farmers. It was remarkable that while some of the Eastern Regiments paid 4s. 6d. for their messing, the Welsh were content to expend only 1s. 6d. or 2s. per diem for their food. Colonel Sir Watkin Wynne would be a remarkable man anywhere. Possessed of great determination, he generally had his way, and being a believer in the theory that horses did not catch cold in the open, he brought into camp in 1902 eleven of his hunters, which stood in a sea of mud at the picket post without injury.

Visiting the Military Hospital at Portsmouth, in order to decide a point between the Sister Services, as the Navy wished to annex a bit of the Military Hospital grounds, I found I had sufficient time to visit Tipnor Magazine, a strange out-of-the-world place, reminding one of Quilp's counting-house in *The Old Curiosity Shop*.[1] I had just succeeded in carrying out, after months of importunity, a change of system which I had inaugurated when I was Adjutant-General. For a month at a time, an officer, 2 sergeants, and 33 men were stationed at Tipnor to guard the magazine. There was nothing for the soldiers to do, and any man confined to a beat, and given a rifle and a bayonet which he must not use, is as inefficient a watchman as can be readily imagined. Perhaps some of my readers may remember the picture of the gutter boy making faces at a handsome Guardsman at Whitehall, who says to the urchin, "You go along out of that." The boy replies, "That's just what you can't do."

I got permission for the Metropolitan Police to take over charge of the Magazine in 1900, when the number of trained soldiers remaining in the country made it difficult to find any such guard. I had represented to the Chief Commissioner, my friend Sir Edward Bradford, it was a most important charge, and must be carefully watched. A few days afterwards, I met Sir Charles Howard, one of the Divisional Superintendents, who lived in the same street as I, and he told me with much

[1] By Charles Dickens.

amusement that having gone to Tipnor unannounced he found the officer and two sergeants were away, and a Lance Corporal was the only person of authority in the place. To my regret, the soldiers have been ordered to resume charge of the place, which would have been much more effectually watched by three or four Civil or Military policemen.

My next visit to Portsmouth was made to decide as to the necessity of having a sentry over a Magazine. I had taken off all the Divisional sentries except one over the General's house, as I did not wish to deprive him of the honour which he prized, but which I had given up on assuming command of the Aldershot Division.

The Commanding officer, whose judgment I generally accepted, judged it to be essential that a guard should be retained, as the Magazine contained ball ammunition. On visiting it, I found it was fairly protected by its natural position, and as the total amount of ammunition in it never exceeded £120 in value, I considered it was bad economy to employ a guard, which cost at least £300 per annum in pay, food, and clothing for the men, and removed it, without any unfortunate result up to the time of my leaving the Command.

Some of the sentries removed have already been replaced. I was sitting at dinner towards the close of my Command between Lord Roberts and General Sir Forestier Walker, and mentioned to his Lordship the previous week I had found a sentry whose primary duty was the protection of a Regimental pet ram, to ensure its not being teased by children. "What Regiment?" he asked. I said, "No, my lord; it is one of my children, and I cannot tell tales out of the family. But you can be satisfied the ram is being teased now; at all events, the sentry is not protecting it." I then told him I had recently seen a sentry at Plymouth, who, on my asking him his duties, answered, "I am to prevent anyone landing at the steps below me in plain clothes except Lord Morley and Lord Mount Edgcumbe." I said, "Do you know these lords?" "No," he said; "I don't know one lord from another." Sir Forestier said, "Why, is that sentry on? I took him off when I was in command." I said, "He has been put back, and I am trying to get him removed by fair words." Sir Forestier observed, "His orders were much better in my time; they ran, "I am not

to allow anyone to bathe at these steps improperly dressed, except Lord Mount Edgcumbe."

In one of my visits to a southern fortress I had been assured £500 should be granted for iron rails for fencing, but on visiting the spot I found that more than the length of railing already existed, and by a slight alteration no addition was required. Similarly, £180 for a Drill Hall having been strongly recommended, I found on visiting the spot there was already a verandah not required for other purposes, 700 feet long by 10 feet wide, which fully answered the purpose.

I did not always succeed. For example, after a year's correspondence, I got the stabling for the Mounted Infantry at Bulford built in the form of a hollow square, the parade being in the centre. My object was to save sentries, and the angles where no stabling existed were closed by five-feet-high iron railings, with gates which swung on rollers. After the stables had been in use for six months, I found that my reasons not having been passed on, the gates were not closed at night, as I had intended, and the economy of sentries had not up to that time been effected.

I shocked some of the Army Corps Staff by my practice of inspecting the unsavoury places at the back of Barracks during my unexpected visitations. The notice I gave as a rule was to despatch a message to the Senior officer on arriving at the Barrack gate. I found much that was undesirable, but never anything to equal that in the Eastern District in 1886–87, where I found a Commanding officer who had occupied barracks for six months did not know whether his latrines were on the dry-earth or water-carriage system, nor where they were situated.

At the close of the hunting season 1901–2 I was staying at Melbury, Lord Ilchester's seat, which is remarkable for many objects of beauty, but in the Fox-hunter's point of view particularly so, in that there were twenty-two litters of cubs in the vicinity of the house. His Lordship, who kept also a pack of Deer Hounds, told me that his best recorded run was some years ago, in the month of June. After dinner, most of the party sat down to Bridge, and Lady Helen Stavordale, his Lordship's daughter-in-law, knowing my tastes, gave me an old

game book in which the list of game shot at Melbury and its vicinity has been noted for 150 years. I was reading about A.D. 1726, where the daily bags of Lords Digby and Ilchester are recorded. It appears they considered two pheasants was a poor day's sport, but anything over eight was held to be satisfactory. There is a curious entry in 1726, "Lord Digby made a very fine shot, and killed a cock pheasant. This was difficult, as it was siting (*sic*) on a hedge." Sportsmen of the present day should remember that the firearms of their predecessors were very different from those now in use.

I had several agreeable visitors at Salisbury, one or two belonging to the Opposition in Parliament, who thought more highly of Mr. Brodrick's scheme of the three Army Corps before they left the district, but perhaps the most pleasant of all was the new Chaplain-General. He kept me up till past midnight talking, being most earnest and enthusiastic about religion, but with a remarkably broad mind. He was addressing a crowded audience in the evening, and was arguing that the Church of England was like the nave of a wheel, the spokes representing all the other branches. When the people were dispersing a coachman came up to him and said, "I liked your address very much, and especially the story about the wheel, but, excuse me, I am a coachman, and think you might well have added the tyre is the love of Christ which should bind us together." The Bishop said, "Thank you, I will use that next time."

In all my efforts for decentralisation I was backed by Mr. St. John Brodrick. He was never wearied of hearing from me, and sympathised with my efforts, often ineffectual, to relieve the offices in London of petty details. I pointed out that I was not permitted to authorise a tenant who rented a piece of beach at Portsmouth which was gravelled, to have it cemented, without referring it to the Inspector-General of Royal Engineers. Mr. Brodrick tried to help me also in my efforts to induce delegation of authority to local Engineer officers. I found in the Western district stairs leading down into an engine-room, on which the soldiers had to carry coal trays, with much difficulty owing to a sharp turn, avoidable if a hole had been cut in the ground, as you see in every London street; and when I disapproved, I was told officially that it

was a type, and types must be followed. Similarly, every screen for shutting off a bath is made about 7 feet high, as if intended for a zenana. Mr. Brodrick endeavoured to assist me in all such points. After inspecting the new Barracks being erected, he wrote: "I congratulate you most heartily on the immense progress made on Salisbury Plain since you assumed command."

He is one of the few Cabinet Ministers I have met who realise the importance of having somebody at the head of troops who can be held responsible for seeing that they are prepared for war. Such an officer must exist to ensure that the ammunition columns, waggons, and equipment of every kind is complete; that the harness for the horses, and the vehicles are all in good order. There are numbers of officers who have a divided duty in these matters, but there should be one person to whom the Army Council can look, and who can be held responsible that the command is ready for War Service.

I was greatly assisted in my endeavours to improve the sanitary state of the barracks in the 2nd Army Corps district by the persevering efforts of the principal Medical officer, Surgeon-General G. J. Evatt, M.D., C.B., than whom I have never had a more enthusiastic sanitary assistant. He introduced great changes, incurring a certain amount of ill-will, as all eager reformers do. His visits to the kitchens of the officers' messes in the barracks of the district brought to the notice of the Commanding officers what I had long known, they were the dirtiest places in barracks, except perhaps the canteens. In few of the latter was there sufficient accommodation, with the result that the contractor's agent was reported in several instances to be "sleeping at the back of the grocery bar, with his head on a cheese and his feet in a butter bowl."

The Surgeon-General helped me to obtain a concession for the soldiers, for which I had striven many years in vain. Up to the time of my command at Salisbury the soldier never had more than two shirts; as one went to wash if he got wet, he had to sleep in it, or sleep naked, at his choice, but day and night one shirt at the wash, and one shirt on the man's body was the custom. With Evatt's assistance and

his graphic accounts of the state of some Militia regiments, the Secretary of State gave way, and authorised a third shirt.

I had hoped that Evatt and I might serve on to get the men a sleeping suit, but the "guns having ceased to shoot," to paraphrase Mr. Kipling, there is now less consideration for the private soldier than is felt in War time.

My indefatigable Sanitary Inspector sympathised greatly with my desire to reduce the number of sentries, appreciating as a doctor the unfavourable effect of night duty on the health of the young soldier; and although I, personally preferring a hard bed, did not sympathise so thoroughly with a reform he advocated, yet I authorised in the command the abolition of the boards on which the soldier slept in the guard-room, which were replaced by bedsteads.

The Surgeon-General found out in one Hospital some reprehensible customs, such as the officer in charge signing his Diet Sheets for a week in advance, and this was in a district where the Ward master, after committing frauds of over £100 on Diet Sheets alone, had just committed suicide.

Surgeon-General Evatt tried to help me in another Reform, which may, I hope, be effected by my successors, for when I gave over the Southern Command in December 1903, my recommendations were "still under consideration."

When I was Quartermaster-General, a company of Garrison Artillery detained for Free Town, Sierra Leone, was quartered half at that Station, and half at Plymouth, ready to embark if required. My study of the Health statistics disclosed the fact, that of 16 men, the 1st Relief of the guns in a battery, at King Tom, situated at the head of a lagoon, 13 were continuously on the Sick Report. I got this detachment removed up to hills, whence they could still get to the battery quickly in case of need. In the nineties a complete Company was stationed at Sierra Leone for twelve months, and in June 1903, when I was inspecting a Company at Falmouth, which had returned four months previously, I was so perturbed by the look of the remains of malarial fever in the men's faces, that I demanded a history of their service on the West Coast. The Company disembarked at Free Town 93 men of unusually fine stature; lost 5 dead, 5 invalided, 1 sent home, and 1 deserter. Struck by the fact that no man died,

or was invalided within the first six months of residence, I submitted that irrespective of dictates of humanity, we should exchange the men every six months, as a more economical arrangement.

The first year I went to Salisbury I gave a cup, with a view to improving the shooting of the Rank and File at unknown distances. Each of the Sub-Districts in the command sent a team of four, who were presumably the best in the corps, as they were ordered to have a preliminary Competition. The result was such as would, if known, encourage soldiers in their first battle. The ground on Salisbury Plain is certainly difficult, consisting of rolling plains without a tree or any mark to guide the eye, and consequently it is very difficult to estimate distances. The first team was composed of three very young soldiers and one veteran who wore spectacles and could not double 300 yards, which was a condition of the competition. Another team consisted of soldiers of about four months who had not done the "Trained Soldier's course" of musketry. The third, from the Devon Regiment, which won, had men of seven, eleven, and eighteen years' service. The targets were actually 2500, 1400, 800, and 340 yards distant. The judging, except at 2500 yards, was ludicrously erroneous, and when the targets jumped up like a "Jack in the box" at 340 yards, all the teams guessed 500 or 600. These targets were only the size of a man's chest, but those 1½ miles off represented a quarter of a Battalion standing in column, and were a broad and deep mark, but in the result 1100 shots fired by the three teams gave only five hits. Although this was very unsatisfactory, it called attention to our faulty training, which I am glad to believe has since been rectified.

The result of the above competition induced me to consult the Surgeon-General, whom I told that when the targets jumped up close to the men, being visible only for forty seconds, many men did not see them until they were disappearing, and under his advice I initiated a system of improving the visual efficiency of the soldiers. It was taken up by Colonel S. Lomax, who was temporarily in command of a brigade, and the result gave satisfaction to everyone. The doctors tested every man separately in the first instance, and the company officers then endeavoured to improve the eyesight of all.

I mentioned the successful result of enabling the Army Service Corps to do their own work and eliminating the middleman as a forwarding agent of Stores,[1] but I was able, by bringing to the notice of the generals under me, to cause them to make considerable saving of public money; that in one Sub-District amounting to something over £2000 per annum.

I called for a return of all the boats in the Command belonging to Government, and also those hired, with a very curious result. It transpired that in one district a coxswain and crew had been paid, although from time immemorial no boat had existed. The oldest clerk in the office had never heard of the boat, nor was there any record of it, and to render the situation rather more comical moorings had been for years hired for that boat. This was explained later by the statement that the moorings were available for all boats, and they merely happened to be entered to that boat as a matter of account; but further inquiry whether any of the boats used the moorings, elicited a negative reply, and a further statement that the hiring of moorings had been discontinued. I said nothing more on the subject, on ascertaining that the general concerned made the economies I have stated above. In another great Naval port there was a similar case, and that was also terminated.

Perhaps the most interesting part of my duties consisted in the instruction and practice of Artillery. I took my Senior Aide-de-camp[2] without ever having seen him, from the recommendation of one of the best Senior officers of Garrison Artillery in the district, Colonel W. W. Smith, writing to him: "Will you please recommend me a Garrison Artillery-Aide-de-camp? He must be able to ride, and must have a good knowledge of, and be keen about his work." He named Major C. Buckle, D.S.O., who found for us the Rhyader Range after looking over many places in Cardiganshire and the adjoining counties. There were only two or three small houses on it which was essential to vacate. The range is quite safe for 12,000 yards, but it has its disadvantage, as have all such places, that it is isolated, and there is a steep climb up to the range of mountains.

I saw some of the Garrison Artillery at one of my inspec-

[1] See vol. ii. p. 233.

[2] Who was also Assistant Military Secretary.

tions fire at a target 3800 yards distant, travelling at 6 miles an hour. The first five shots were all on the target, and the sixth shot cut the connecting rope by which the steamer was towing it.

Early in the Spring of 1903 I read at breakfast in the *Times* that Sir George White had been made a Field Marshal by His Majesty the King, who was visiting Gibraltar, and when I got to the office I found the Army Corps Staff indignant, as Sir George was a colonel when I as a Major-General of four years' standing had got him brought out to Egypt for the Khartoum Expedition. I sent him a telegram congratulating him on his good fortune, and received a reply in a very short time, that he heard on the best authority I had received the same honour. In the afternoon I had a kind private letter from the Secretary of State announcing His Majesty's pleasure, to whom I wrote a letter of grateful thanks the same evening, and received the following gracious reply:—

H.M. Royal Yacht *Victoria and Albert*,
Malta, *April* 1903.

My dear Sir Evelyn Wood,—Many thanks for your kind letter. It has given me the greatest pleasure and satisfaction to promote you to the rank of Field Marshal, after the long and distinguished services you have rendered for the Crown and country.—Believe me, very sincerely yours,

Edward *R.*

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